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THE INDEPENDENT

Tuesday 31 March 1998 45p (IR 50p) No 3,572

Newspaper of the Year for photographs

UN damns Ulster police intimidation

Exclusive

By David McKittrick
Ireland Correspondent

A UNITED Nations report will accuse the Royal Ulster Constabulary of systematic "intimidation, hindrance and harassment" of lawyers representing republican and loyalist suspects.

It is to call for two independent inquiries - one into the alleged intimidation, and another into the 1989 murder of Belfast solicitor Pat Finucane, citing continuing suspicions of security force collusion in his killing.

The report, an advance copy of which has been obtained by *The Independent*, was drawn up for the United Nations Human Rights Commission. It is expected to be presented to the Commission in Geneva this week, possibly today.

Its far-reaching criticisms will provide a significant challenge for the Government and security forces, with its charges that the RUC systematically targets lawyers for intimidation.

The authorities will also not welcome the reopening of the question of the Finucane murder, which is regarded by many as a particularly murky case within the loyalist underworld.

It has already given rise to many accusations of co-operation between elements of the intelligence community and the loyalist gunmen who killed him.

The report is the work of a distinguished Malaysian jurist, Param Cumaraswamy, who is the UN Human Rights Commission's special rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers. His visit to Belfast last October was the first ever visit to Ulster by a UN rapporteur.

The Government may well be disappointed that he delivered such serious criticisms despite being given unprecedented access to important figures such as the Lord Chief Justices of Britain and Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland DPP Alastair Fraser and RUC Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan.

The RUC last night responded sharply to his report, saying it fell short in terms of objectivity, accuracy and fairness. It added: "As a supposed fact-finding mission, it gives scant regard to measurable facts or evidence to support allegations."

Mr Cumaraswamy reported that he had spoken to a large number of solicitors and barristers engaged in terrorist-related cases, all of whom, he said, had corroborated reports of harassment and intimidation.

Lawyers had complained that police regularly abused them. They also said that detectives often told clients during interrogations that their lawyers were working for paramilitary groups rather than for them as individuals.

Rosemary Nelson, who represents Colin Duffy, a well-known republican, alleged she had been the victim of numerous death threats. She also accused an RUC officer of spitting on her face, and another of striking her on the back of the head with a riot shield.

The report said most lawyers believed making official complaints about such matters was futile since any investigation would be carried out by the RUC itself. It added: "Many referred to the harassment and intimidation as an occupational hazard that they had come to expect and accept."

The report cited statistics from the Independent Commission for Police Complaints. These indicated that in 1996, the lodging of 2,540 new cases of complaint had resulted in disciplinary charges against 10 officers, only one of whom was found guilty of abuse of authority. The ICPC yesterday confirmed these figures were correct.

Test for Labour, page 2

Female champion has British boxing chiefs on the ropes



Boxer Jane Couch, known as the Fleetwood Assassin, has won her sex discrimination battle against the boxing authorities. A proud moment, page 3. Photograph: John Gichigi/Allsport

Clinton's woes worsened by 'rapist' claim

By Mary Dejevsky
in Washington

WARY OF transgressing the bounds of law and public taste, the United States media were yesterday tiptoeing around one of the most sensational accusations to have emerged from the tortuous investigation of President Bill Clinton's sex life: that in 1978, while attorney general of Arkansas, he raped a woman and resorted to bribery and threats to cover it up.

The accusation of rape against Juanita Broaddrick, a nursing home supervisor, was contained in documents filed by lawyers for Paula Jones, the woman who is suing Mr Clinton for sexual harassment over an alleged incident in an Arkansas hotel room eight years ago.

The alleged rape is the subject of a letter written to the alleged victim by Ms Broaddrick's male friend, Phillip Yoakum, in 1992. In it, he refers back to "your brutal rape by Bill Clinton" and supplies graphic details, including "how you resisted until he ripped your clothes off". He added, "He bit your lip until you gave into his forcing sex upon you."

Ms Jones's lawyers have produced the letter to support their case that their client's experience was part of a pattern of behaviour by Mr Clinton over many years.

While the letter brought into the open a rumour that has long circulated in President's home state of Arkansas, its contents were widely treated as suspect. And Ms Broaddrick herself has said under oath that there was no such incident. Contacted by the Associated Press news agency at the weekend, she would make no comment. Her lawyer said there was "a vicious process" going on, and "we're not going to get involved".

The author of the letter, meanwhile, was not to be found and so could not be asked why he was relating the sordid details of a alleged rape back to the victim 14 years later.

While the President took time out from his Africa tour to view lions and elephants in Botswana, reporters back home have ignored the rape allegation or countered it immediately with the White House response that it was "outrageous and false".

NBC was the only US network to report the charge quickly and as a potential "sensation". The cable network, CNN, which - like several US channels - has held back from reporting anti-Clinton allegations since appearing to forecast the President's demise over sex allegations two months ago, did not mention the claim until yesterday.

The main broadsheet newspapers also steered around the issue. They are introducing the rape allegation as secondary to the less sensitive, though still damaging, claim of Ms Jones's lawyers, that the White House obstructed the course of justice by not producing letters written by another of Mr Clinton's alleged victims, Kathleen Willey.

Photograph, page 11

Gary Glitter faces 50 child porn charges

By Rosa Prince

THE SINGER Gary Glitter was yesterday charged with 50 offences relating to child pornography. Glitter, 53, was charged under his real name, Paul Francis Gadd, after six hours of questioning at Staple Hill police station, Bristol, and failed to appear at Northavon magistrates court on 18 May.

He is charged with 50 counts of making indecent pseudo-photographs of children under the age of 16 years, contrary to section one of the Child Protection Act 1978. The charges relate to the downloading of child pornography from the Internet, and carries a maximum penalty of three years' jail.

He is also charged with 50 alternative counts of possessing indecent photographs of children under the age of 16.



Gary Glitter: Questioned by police for six hours

Glitter became known as the Comeback King, famous for such hits as "Hello, Hello I'm Back Again" and "I'm the Leader of the Gang (I am)".

His solicitor, Henri Brandman, yesterday issued a statement denying the charges.

"Gary will be vigorously contesting these allegations. Since he has now been charged, neither he nor I will be making any further comment. He is in good spirits and I anticipate he will be continuing with his career."

Police began investigating Glitter in November after they were alerted by staff at a Bristol branch of PC World where the singer had taken his computer to be repaired.

Staff said indecent images of children had been downloaded from the Internet and stored on the machine. Glitter denied the allegations.

He went to the police station voluntarily yesterday after flying back into the country at the weekend. He had been living in Cuba since the end of his Christmas tour with his 25-year-old girlfriend, Yudenia Sosa Martinez.

Today's news

Rolls-Royce taken over by BMW

ROLLS-ROYCE, the luxury car-maker that has been a symbol of British prestige for nearly a century, passed into German hands yesterday. BMW, which already owns Rover, is buying Rolls for £240m, more than double the book value. Page 3, 19

'Road rage' hearing

A MOTORIST who boasted to police that he was "the best driver ever" killed a young couple instantly by shunting their car out of his way and into the path of an oncoming vehicle, a court was told yesterday. Page 3



Millennium bug crisis could trigger national emergency

By Anthony Bevis
and Louise Jury

THE millennium bug computer crisis might have to be treated as a civil emergency from the end of next year, the Prime Minister warned yesterday.

Announcing the package of "bug-busting" measures disclosed in yesterday's *Independent*, Tony Blair told a London conference that the economy would slow down as companies diverted resources to cope with computer breakdowns and some companies would go bust.

He also disclosed that he had received a warning from Niall FitzGerald, chairman of Unilever, the Anglo-Dutch conglomerate, "that it could cause a world-wide recession".

With computers working on two-digit years, like 98, many will be unable to differentiate

between 1900 and 2000 when 00 arrives at the turn of the century. Millions of inter-linked computer systems could crash and many are already betraying problems. "The problem is ticking away simultaneously inside many computers, mainframes and electronic systems all over the world," he warned.

Mr Blair said there were parts of the national infrastructure that were vital to everyday life, "whether the gas, water and electricity companies, the Benefits Agency or the transport system. These are the parts of the infrastructure that we cannot afford to fail in the next two years."

He said it would be "foolhardy" not to prepare for the possibility of failures, but added: "There are well-established safety net arrangements for coping with civil emergencies. We will

make sure that they are properly geared up to deal with any major problems which could be caused by the millennium bug."

The *Independent* has been told that civil defence plans are being adapted to make sure that essential users get essential fuel, power and food supplies.

The Prime Minister said yesterday that much work had already been done, but he warned that some hospitals and local authorities were being left behind. "Without careful preparation there could be major disruption to essential government services," he said.

Don Cruickshank, chairman of the Action 2000 campaign, said last night: "All the public services - like air traffic control, telecommunications, power generation - have their forms of emergency planning. But they all need to be adapted to deal with

the special features of the millennium bug, and brought together into a cross-the-economy contingency plan."

Mr Blair's warnings were underlined by the NHS Confederation of Health Authorities and Trusts, which said the Government had to find extra cash to deal with the problem, or patient care would suffer. The bill to the NHS was estimated at between £500m and £60m, but no extra money was being provided.

Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrats' Treasury spokesman, said: "If Tony Blair wants to show that he understands the magnitude of this problem, then he should tell Gordon Brown to allocate money from the Contingency Reserve to helping local authorities, the NHS and the Ministry of Defence tackle these problems."

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'Driver used rally skill to kill couple'

By Ian Burrell

A MOTORIST who boasted to police that he was "the best driver ever" killed a young couple instantly by shunting their car out of his way and into the path of an oncoming vehicle on a dual carriageway, a court was told yesterday.

Jason Humble, an amateur rally driver for 15 years, failed to stop his powerful former police car, a Vauxhall Senator, after the accident, even though it must have been obvious something serious had happened, the Old Bailey was told.

The crash that killed Toby Exley, 22, and his girlfriend, Karen Martin, 20, at Hanworth, west London, last October prompted a major police hunt for the following car and press speculation that the accident was the work of a hitman, or was drug-related, David Perry, for the prosecution, told the jury. "But the truth was it was pointless and random and not connected with drug dealing or hit men."

He said that Mr Humble's car was seen by a motorcyclist to strike the couple's black Ford Fiesta three times in the rear. "Toby Exley and Karen Martin died because the defendant became impatient with them. He used his skill as a driver - if skill it was - to nudge their car out of the way."

Mr Humble, 33, unemployed, of Farnborough, Hampshire, denies manslaughter. He also pleads not guilty to causing death by dangerous driving.

The motorcyclist, Brian Gill, 40, a teacher of north London, said that the Fiesta was pushed. "There was a screaming noise from the tyres" and a lot of smoke came out. It went off

sideways," he told the court.

According to the prosecution, the Fiesta turned almost 90 degrees across the central reservation barrier, into the path of another driver.

"It was more of a push than a bump. Mr Gill heard the squeal of tyres. He saw the defendant's car pull back and drive up again, making contact a second time," Mr Perry said. "Then it pulled back before accelerating forward again, striking it in the rear."

The identity of the other car and its driver remained a mystery for more than two weeks, Mr Perry said. When Mr Humble was eventually arrested 17 days later, he admitted that he had been the driver but denied deliberately using his car to force the other car on to the oncoming carriageway. "He said there was a minute possibility the vehicles had touched but he had not been responsible for causing Mr Exley to lose control."

Asked whether he was driving dangerously, Mr Humble allegedly told police: "Absolutely not. I think I am the best driver ever." He told police that Mr Exley had cut him up on a roundabout and was driving like "a prat". He said he sat behind him for a while and flashed him once or twice.

The Fiesta braked, forcing him to brake. Mr Humble allegedly said he thought Mr Exley was deliberately blocking him and was "pissed off". He had not stayed at the scene nor report it because he was fearful.

Tests on Mr Exley after the crash showed traces of a product of cocaine in his urine and traces of cannabis in his blood. But a blood-alcohol test was negative, the court was told. The case continues.



Riding high: The Spirit Of Ecstasy, designed by Charles Sykes and first used by Rolls-Royce in 1911, on a 1954 Silver Dawn at Rolls-Royce service provider P&A Wood Of Great Easton, Essex

End of an era as Spirit of Ecstasy finds a foreign owner

By Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

IN THE
NEWS

ROLLS-ROYCE

WHAT'S in a name? In the case of Rolls-Royce, the answer is at least £190m. Yesterday's sale of Britain's premier car marque to BMW saw the nation's last serious car maker pass into foreign hands.

Valued by Vickers - its present owners - at £150m, BMW bought Crewe's "Spirit of Ecstasy" for £134m. Notable owners have included the Queen, Mao Tse-tung, John Lennon, Charlie Chaplin and Noel Gallagher.

BMW, which already owns Rover and Land Rover and the Mini and the MG marques, has long banked after the silver presence of Rolls-Royce. It beat off a number of other bidders, including Volkswagen. Such was the glamour of owning Rolls-Royce that many deep-pocketed tycoons, said to include Formula One boss Bernie Ecclestone and Mohamed Al Fayed, took out their calculators to see if they could afford it.

But none could match BMW's financial clout. At the Geneva Motor Show earlier this year Bernd Pischetsrieder, the chairman, promised to pump £1bn into two new model lines in the next decade if BMW took over.

Industry experts say the first to emerge could be a baby Bentley based on the prototype Java, showcased in 1994. It was a marked departure from Rolls' image of the stuffy British style. The four-seater coupé came with a clip-on roof but what it lacked on top it made up for under the bonnet. Its 3.5-litre engine was designed to catapult the car to 60mph in five seconds and the Java could comfortably cruise at 170mph. Rolls-Royce, founded by the

engineer Henry Royce and the Hon Charles Stewart Rolls, has come a long way since the first "Royce" trundled out in 1904. Two years later came "the best car in the world" - the Silver Ghost - and the Rolls-Royce that the rich know was born. Last month the latest model - the Silver Seraph - was unveiled and modestly described as "the dawn of a new era".

Rolls-Royce remains indisputably British - its production line will stay at Crewe. But there can be little doubt that Germany's gain is Britain's loss. BMW hopes to match British engineering brilliance with Germanic business sense. Mr Pischetsrieder said it could make 30 per cent savings and aimed to treble sales to 6,000 a year.

For those on the shopfloor, the rising tide of globalism was welcomed. Rolls-Royce's chief executive, Graham Morris, said the company was looking forward to the millennium. "Everybody recognises this is a global economy. In some ways it's sad we've moved out of British hands, but there was no real British alternative."

Others were less sanguine. "The rape of British industry by BMW is systematically going ahead. People say we live in a global village. Every village has a chief and its poor man. Is Britain heading towards becoming the poor man of the global village?" said Donald Longmore, secretary of the Rolls-Royce Acquisition Consortium, a group of fans which tried to buy the business.

Business, page 19

Leading film directors join forces in battle over fees

By Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

THE film directors Alan Parker, Mike Leigh, Neil Jordan and Stanley Kubrick have joined forces with directors of television programmes such as *Cracker* and *Hearbeat* to demand repeat fees for their films.

The Directors' Rights Campaign has signed up the top 1,000 makers of films and television programmes in the United Kingdom to demand that their fees take account of repeats, video releases, overseas sales and sales of their programmes to satellite and cable channels.

At the moment, actors and writers are paid a fee for their original work on a programme, but also have contracts that give them extra money if a programme is sold on or shown over and over again. Now, with the boom in television channels directors are demanding the same treatment. They also want contracts that give them extra fees when a film does well or is released on video.



Director Alan Parker: 'It is time we made a stand'

Mr Parker, director of *Angel Heart* and *The Commitments*, and current president of the British Film Institute, is a leading member of the campaign. "As new technologies allow our film and television work to be shown more and more ways around the world, we are crazy not to insist on benefiting from the considerable and continued exploitation of our work. The UK is totally backward and out of step in recognising our rights,

and it is time we made a collective stand."

The directors' campaign comes as more and more of the creative talent in British television demands a bigger share of the rewards from the industry. The independent producers' alliance, Pact, is campaigning for broadcasters such as the BBC, ITV and Channel 4 to give producers ownership of the programmes they make so they can make money from overseas or repeat sales. Actors are also in a battle with advertising agencies to keep their repeat fees for appearing in television campaigns that are shown repeatedly.

Herbert Wise, director of the Seventies adaptation of Robert Graves' classic *I, Claudius*, has joined the campaign because the programme has been sold overseas so many times that if he had made the series in the United States, where directors get a share of the proceeds, he would have been able to retire on the money. "All directors are losing out by this shoddy treat-

ment, which is simply not acceptable," he says. "As the number of channels increases, it is essential that we receive proper rewards for what we do."

The Directors' Rights Campaign plans to lobby next week's Audio-Visual Summit in Birmingham when heads of the film and television industries will meet under the aegis of the British Presidency of the European Union. The campaign also plans to lobby the EU and parliament to force broadcasters to take account of a 1996 EU directive that gives directors rights as co-authors.

Bectu, the broadcasting technicians' union, is threatening to disrupt the BBC's summer sports coverage, including that of Wimbledon and Ascot, after conducting a poll of its members about plans to hive off the BBC's programme-making arm as a subsidiary. Bectu, which believes the plans will lead to privatisation, is planning a strike ballot if the BBC does not give it guarantees about job security and casual working.

A proud moment for woman boxer

By Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

JANE COUCH, the women's world welterweight champion, yesterday won her sex discrimination case against Britain's professional boxing authorities.

The decision by an industrial tribunal now means that applications for licences from women should now be treated on the same basis as men's.

Miss Couch said that she expected her application to the British Boxing Board of Control to be processed "within weeks" and that she would be seeking thousands of pounds in compensation for loss of earnings and £20,000 for "hurt feelings".

The fighter, known as "the Westwood Assassin", said she had been trying to box profes-

sionally in the United Kingdom for three years but had been denied the right to do so by the authorities. Ms Couch is scheduled to defend her world welterweight championship on 24 May.

Yesterday she acknowledged boxing was a "very dangerous" sport, but there was no reason why she should not be allowed to fight in her own country.

She said the people of her home town, Fleetwood, Lancashire would be proud of her victory. "They are not narrow-minded and neither are my family - they're all right behind me."

She added: "It's bad enough being in the ring without having to fight the authorities. The job itself is very demanding. They made me feel pissed off."

The tribunal found that Ms Couch, 29, whose case was

backed by the Equal Opportunities Commission, had been "extremely badly treated" by the boxing board. The south London tribunal gave the authorities 42 days to settle the matter.

Sarah Leslie, her solicitor, pointed out that the decision did not mean her client was automatically granted a licence, but her application should now go through the orthodox channels.

In its ruling the tribunal said the evidence that Ms Couch suffered sex discrimination was "incontrovertible".

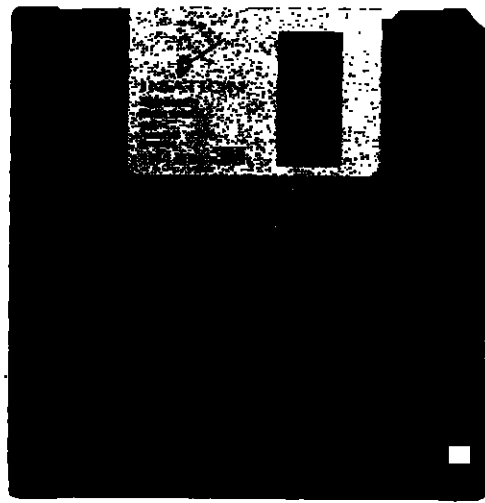
The board had turned down her application on the basis that she would be "emotionally unstable" during periods and more prone to accidents. It was also suggested that women were more susceptible to bruising and therefore to brain damage. It

was also alleged that a woman might box inadvertently during the early stages of pregnancy.

The tribunal pointed out that while the application was rejected on medical grounds, Ms Couch was never examined by a board doctor. There was "overwhelming evidence" that her request for a licence was turned down because she was female. The "medical grounds" on which she was rejected were all "gender-based stereotypes and assumptions".

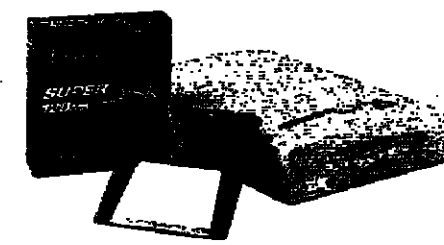
John Morris, secretary of the BBBC, issued a brief statement saying that the decision of the tribunal had been "noted" and there would be no further comment until board members had had a chance to consider its implications with legal and medical advisers.

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Racial abuse targeted in a grim week for football that has seen a fan die and allegations of boardroom narcotics abuse

Blair moves kick racism into touch

By Kim Sengupta

THE Prime Minister yesterday gave his backing to a report which declares there should be "zero tolerance" of racism in football and recommends a series of sweeping measures to combat it.

Signalling its intention of acting on the proposals, the Government immediately announced changes in the law to enable criminal charges to be brought against individual spectators who chant racial abuse.

At the presentation of the

first report by the Government's Football Task Force yesterday, Sports Minister Tony Banks revealed that current legislation in the Football Offences Act would be amended at the "earliest possible opportunity" to accommodate the new measure. The Task Force, set up by the new Government in July 1997 under the chairmanship of broadcaster and former minister David Mellor, has come up with 40 different sets of ideas for tackling racism and attracting more blacks and Asians to become involved in

the game. The inquiry found that racism was still deeply entrenched in English football. Some of the worst examples of this were at the bottom and top ends of the sport. Racist abuse was endemic in many local amateur games, and at the same time there were no black or Asian representation on the Football Association council. There was also a paucity of people from the ethnic minorities in administrative positions. Although Britain's non-white population is 7.3 per

cent, they make up just one per cent of Premier League crowds, says the report. And at a time when black footballers are succeeding at the highest level, the number of black spectators is decreasing. Black and Asian supporters are put off by prospects of insults and intimidation. The report says that in amateur football, councils should ban clubs with a record of racist behaviour from playing fields, and at a professional level stewards at matches should be trained to deal with racist incidents as part of a new mandatory National Vocational Qualification. The Task Force also recommends anti-racist pledges should be put in the contracts of players and managers, with breaches leading to heavy fines or even dismissals. And referees should be given new guidance that racist abuse on the field is a red-card offence.

Gordon Taylor, Chief Executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, said it welcomed the campaign but he added that there will have to be fundamental changes in the approach to settling disputes between players with potential problems. "In the past things could have been settled by people meeting and apologising for what they had done or said to the wronged party. But that will be difficult when the accusation is one of racist behaviour; players wouldn't want to admit they had said something of a racial nature if they are then going to be branded a racist."

Mr Mellor maintained there must be zero tolerance to racism. Our main concern is to propose practical measures to stamp out racism wherever it occurs, not just on the pitch or terraces, but boardrooms and boot-rooms.

Mr Blair welcomed the "timely report coming just before the World Cup". He added: "For too long racism has scarred football. The proposals will be studied carefully. They could make a real difference in tackling the problem. I am proud of the multi-cultural society we live in, proud to lead a government that believes nobody should be shut out of society's mainstream."

Blair to miss Cook's wedding

THERE will be a notable absentee when Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, marries his partner and personal assistant Gaynor Regan on 19 April 19 - Tony Blair.

And, while Mr Cook ties the knot at Mr Cook's official residence of Chevening in Kent, the Prime Minister will be in Israel. Mr Blair will be seeking to ease the tensions between Britain and Israel strained by the Foreign Secretary's visit there two weeks ago, when Mr Cook made a visit to an Israeli settlement and was snubbed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Mr Blair and his wife Cherie are likely to be invited to a subsequent reception attended by a larger number of guests at the Foreign Secretary's official London home at Carlton House Terrace.

Muddle over school books

TEACHERS' leaders yesterday accused ministers of allowing a scheme to give schools extra textbooks to descend into a "bureaucratic muddle".

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers claimed hundreds of schools would miss out on the offer of £1,000 for extra books because many schools assumed they would get the money if they simply ordered the books by today's closing date. In fact, the books must be delivered to schools by the closing date if schools are to get the special grants.

NFU chief fined

The president of the Scottish National Farmers' Union was yesterday fined £400 after pleading guilty to two charges involving the treatment of sheep from his island farm.

George Lyon was fined £250 for allowing the transportation of seven ewes from Rothessy, on the island of Bute, to Stirling auction market when they were unfit to be moved.

He was fined a further £150 at Rothessy sheriff court for allowing one ewe to be caused unnecessary pain and distress.

Irvine retreats

THE Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, has bowed to the might of a small Scottish council in a row over his home improvements.

He thought he did not need a building warrant to carry out improvement work on his Scottish holiday retreat on the remote Kintyre peninsula. But officials of Argyll and Bute council who inspected the property on Friday have decided he did need one - putting him, it appears, in technical breach of the law.

Show censured

THE *Ramsey Report* was unfair to a charity hospital and unjustified in secret filming of one of its patients, the Broadcasting Standards Commission broadcasting ruled yesterday.

The British Home and Hospital for Incurables said the BSC finding on the August 1996 programme, "Speaking Up For Geoffrey", was a vindication after a long fight. The finding was contrary to that of the BBC's complaints unit which cleared the programme.

Fear over game's violent weekend

DETECTIVES investigating the killing of a Fulham football fan were last night continuing to question a man as politicians, police chiefs and senior figures in football administration expressed concern that the game was slipping back to a "dark age" of violence and intimidation, writes Kim Sengupta.

Police in Kent released two men they had been holding over the death of Matthew Fox. But they were granted a 36-hour extension for the continued detention of a 30-year-old man.

Mr Fox's death outside Gillingham football ground, during a weekend of disturbances at football grounds across the country, sparked a wider debate about the return of soccer hooliganism and the damage it may do to the prospect of England hosting the World Cup in 2006.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, expressed "profound anger" over the re-emergence of violence in the sport. And he warned that police and the football authorities would do all they could to ensure it was "heavily clamped down on".

Speaking in the Commons, the Home Secretary also pointed to potential scope for violence in the World Cup, and strongly criticised the marketing of knives branded by the Federation of International Football Associations (Fifa) for the World Cup in France which could be used as weapons by troublemaking fans.



Kevin Keegan, Fulham's director of football, outside the gates at Craven Cottage where fans left wreaths and scarves in memory of Matthew Fox

Photograph: PA

The sports minister, Tony Banks, insisted that the weekend's events had "not damaged at all" the 2006 World Cup bid. And he added: "These isolated very tragic events, which the police will deal with,

are not the true face of English football. There are still those who turn up at football grounds who should never be allowed in there".

Fifa, however, refused to say whether the trouble would

harm England's bid. A spokesman added that the results of the investigation into what happened at Gillingham will have to be carefully studied.

Meanwhile the family of Mr Fox visited the Fulham ground

at Craven Cottage and spoke of their loss, and their son's passion for the team.

In a statement read by club chaplain Gary Piper, they said: "To say we are devastated does not even begin to describe how

they are feeling. He loved all sports but his main passion was his love for Fulham... where he could often be heard singing at the top of his voice." They added that it would have been Mr Fox's 25th birthday today.

Fulham's director of football, Kevin Keegan, speaking on behalf of the club owner Mohamed Al-Fayed and all players and staff, said: "This is an appalling tragedy and a pointless loss of a young life."

Police inquiry into Hall drug claims

By Ian Burrell

NORTHUMBRIA police confirmed yesterday that they were investigating the former Newcastle United vice-chairman, Douglas Hall, over allegations that he took drugs.

The investigation followed reports in the *Sunday Mirror* in which several witnesses claimed to have seen Mr Hall taking drugs.

Northumbria police said that a senior officer had contacted the newspaper in connection with the allegations and jour-

nalists had been asked to hand over statements.

A force spokeswoman said: "The inquiry is in its early stages. A lot will depend on what information is gathered and what that points to."

Prior to publication of the article nine days ago, Mr Hall's solicitor had issued a denial that his client had ever been involved in drug-taking.

The police action follows calls by Jim Cousins, the Labour MP for Newcastle Central, for an investigation into the claims, which referred to locations in his

constituency. Yesterday he said: "If the allegations that were made in the newspaper are correct then they refer to what would be serious criminal offences."

"There must be an investigation to get to the bottom of it for the sake of everybody concerned, including Douglas Hall."

News of the Northumbria police inquiry follows the revelation in *The Independent* yesterday that South Yorkshire police are investigating a £200m proposed property develop-

ment involving a company controlled by Mr Hall.

Detectives involved in a wider inquiry into allegations of financial mismanagement at Doncaster council have spoken to council officers, and former and serving councillors in Doncaster in connection with an ambitious plan to build a championship golf course on prime agricultural and green belt land at Rossington Hall.

The 2,300-acre project also includes a leisure hotel and business complex and 1,100 homes. Mr Hall and Newcastle

United's chairman, Freddy Shepherd, resigned from the club a week ago after allegedly making derogatory remarks about fans and describing Newcastle women as "dogs" to an undercover reporter from the *News of the World*.

After their comments, allegedly made in a Spanish brothel, were made public, 96 per cent of Newcastle supporters called on them to go. Following the resignations, Mr Hall's father, the millionaire Sir John Hall, took over the club chairmanship.



Douglas Hall: Legal denial



Freddy Shepherd: Had to go

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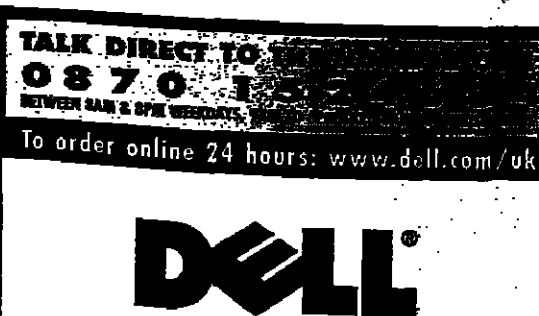
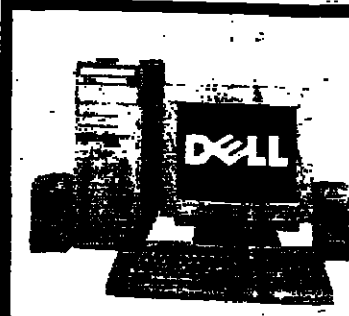
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Campaigning adverts under fire

'Political' agenda sparks new wave of complaints to industry watchdog, writes Paul McCann



Making a point: Lee jeans' image (above) was last year's second most complained about advertisement, surpassed only by the Gun Control Network's campaign (below left) for a ban on handgun ownership. Peugeot's tattoo advertisement (right) attracted criticism of a more traditional kind

And pigs might fly

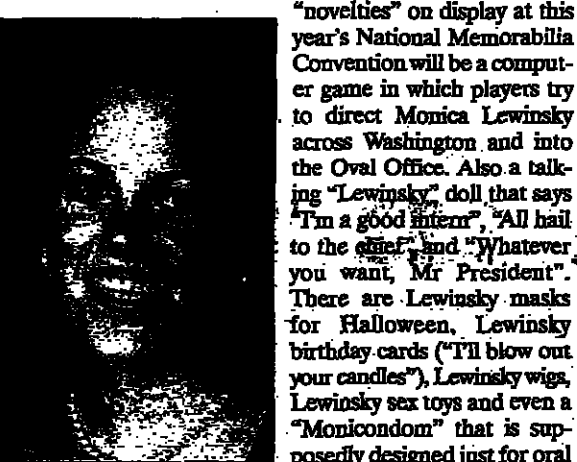
PANDORA has a modest proposal for Tony Blair. If he wants to put an end to all the carping about his relationship with Rupert Murdoch, he should send Tony Banks, minister for sport, on a fact-finding mission to Spain. Eight months ago, the Spanish parliament passed a law requiring important football matches to be broadcast free on television. Now the Spanish are about to appoint a new sports council that will go beyond just football and declare a wide range of sporting events in the public interest. All those selected will be off-limits to satellite or cable pay TV. Surely if Blair adopted a similar policy here, the enormous gratitude of the British viewing public would eclipse any hostility broadcast by an outraged Murdoch and his media mouthpieces.

Old joke, new danger

FOLLOWING the Prime Minister's speech to the Millennium Bug conference at the Barbican yesterday, John Humphrys, of the *Today* programme, chaired a panel on the subject. The headstrong radio presenter, who fell foul of the Government for his supposedly rough treatment of Harriet Harman last year, led off with a joke. It told of a new Labour MP who goes to the barber to have his hair cut but refuses to take off the headphones he is wearing. All the barber's entreaties prove useless; the MP insists that "Peter Mandelson says that I must wear these at all times". This makes the barber's job much more difficult and, eventually, he cajoles the MP into taking them off. Within moments, the MP begins to gurgle, choke and then dies. Sometime later, after the politician's body has been carted off for the post-mortem, the barber finds the headphones that have fallen off in the confusion and decides to have a listen. He hears the recorded voice of Mandelson, repeating: "Breathe in... breathe out... breathe in..." Pandora's prediction: John Humphrys won't be chairing many Government-sponsored panel discussions in future.

Tasteless memorabilia

AMERICAN marketing genius - that inspired immodesty which turned a cartoon mouse into billions of dollars and cheap hamburgers into an international corporate empire - is bearing down on President Clinton's Zippergate. Among the 3,000



"novelties" on display at this year's National Memorabilia Convention will be a computer game in which players try to direct Monica Lewinsky across Washington and into the Oval Office. Also a talking "Lewinsky" doll that says "I'm a good intern", "All hail to the chief", and "Whatever you want, Mr President". There are Lewinsky masks for Halloween, Lewinsky birthday cards ("I'll blow out your candles"), Lewinsky wigs, Lewinsky sex toys and even a "Monicondom" that is supposedly designed just for oral - enough of this tat. Pandora

It must be the food

THE Norman Invasion, Part II, is coming to your local post office, bus stop and corner shop. According to *Le Figaro*, there are now 60,000 French citizens seeking their fortunes in the City of London alone. Meanwhile, a French consular official estimates that there are about 180,000 French men and women resident in Le Bretagne. Cool. Many in this unprecedented new wave of Gallic immigrants are under 30 years old, with a *Le Figaro* poll showing that, after the United States, Britain is the second most popular emigration destination for a generation severely disillusioned with its own society. Not only is the unemployment rate in Paris twice what it is in London, but we now have dozens of Michelin-starred restaurants on this side of the Channel. Poor de Gaulle must be spinning in his grave.

Comedy of errors

SHAME on the Northern Examining Board, whose further GCSE English practice papers for 1998 contain the flagrant misspelling "practise" in bold type on their title page. Pandora suggests the examiners consult their Fowler's *Modern English Usage*.

Pandora

from the public, the Meat and Livestock Commission and from cancer charities who believed it misleadingly implied that vegetarians did not get cancer. The ASA fast-tracked a judgement on the advertisement in October and banned it.

It attracted complaints both

"While large numbers of complaints can indicate the strength of feeling by groups of complainants, they do not necessarily indicate that an advertisement breaks the advertising codes of practice," said an ASA spokesman.

The number of complaints about the portrayal of women fell by 45 per cent last year, but the second most complained about advertisement concerned the portrayal of men. Lee's advertisement for its boot-cut jeans, which showed a woman's

stiletto pressing on a naked male rear, attracted complaints and led to claims that so-called "girl power" was creeping into advertising.

More familiar in nature were the 46 complaints against Peugeot's "tattoo" advert which

featured a tattoo of a Peugeot 106 on a woman's midriff. 36 about a Gossard bra poster where the model's nipples could be seen and 27 against the fashion chain French Connection for its deliberately provocative F.C.U.K. poster campaign.

Social services failed abuse-case children

By Roger Dobson

A COUPLE who sexually abused and tortured their young children, including videoing some of the horrific attacks, had been known to social services for nearly 15 years.

Investigators examined more than 200 extracts from social services records about the family that had been logged between 1981 and 1996, according to an independent inquiry report published yesterday. But the parents were not arrested and jailed until two years ago, after the eldest of their five children told teachers what was happening.

Yesterday's report detailed a catalogue of missed opportunities blamed on management failings, inadequate systems, errors of judgement and errors of omission, and it urges the agencies involved to consider whether they should take disciplinary action. One manager

has already left. "There were many opportunities from 1982 to 1996 when routine child protection work should have protected each child. Until 1996, they escaped any concerted inter-agency activity to protect their children," it says.

"In this case there are professionals who must be asking themselves whether individually or collectively they could have done more to protect the children in this family at a far earlier stage."

Over the years there were reports of burn marks, genital soreness, a broken arm, a black eye, and other injuries, as well as other clues, including anonymous allegations of sexual abuse, a history of domestic violence, a GP's concern about possible child battering, hard core pornography found by police in a child's bedroom, and complaints from neighbours. All failed to secure the protec-

tion the children needed. There were other indicators too. Nine years before his arrest, the father, who is now serving life, was investigated by the police for allegedly sexually abusing his five-year-old niece.

"The extent of degrading and abusive treatment of children by the parents revealed in the video films counts among the most serious ever recorded in the UK," says the report by Geoffrey James, a former social services inspector. He added: "Individual agencies should consider whether disciplinary action is necessary in respect of some staff in this case."

He makes nine recommendations, including better inter-agency training and new working definitions of neglect. He also wants agencies to have better liaison with the coroner where cases of sudden death in children are checked against the at-risk register.

Hicks, defining figure of interior design, dies

DAVID HICKS, one of the defining figures in the world of interior and garden design in Britain since the Second World War, has died, aged 68. Mr Hicks died peacefully at home in Oxfordshire, looking out, according to his death notice on the garden he had fashioned since moving there in the late Seventies.

Hicks, with the late John Fowler, turned interior designing in Britain, once the domain of powerful society women such as Syrie Maugham and Sybil Colefax, into a profession in which a dedicated practitioner worked on projects alongside architects.

Hicks was propelled into the public eye in 1960 when he married Edwina Mountbatten, the younger daughter of Earl Mountbatten of Burma, thus becoming part of the extended world of the Royal



Hicks Part of the extended world of the Royal Family

Family and Sixties café society also inhabited by Princess Margaret and Tony Snowdon.

His first book, *David Hicks on Decoration*, appeared in 1966. The house that the Hickses made for their family at Britwell Salome, with its strong colours, and rich furnishings, was definitive of the style which he also employed at

Baronscourt, the seat in Northern Ireland of the Duke of Abercorn, where he adapted a series of rooms of parade into a home for modern life, with a kitchen rounding off the sequence of grand reception rooms.

He also produced interiors for the QE2, a royal yacht for King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and a new library at the Lutyns British Embassy in Washington DC when it was redecorated room by room by British designers. In the Seventies and Eighties Hicks turned increasingly to garden design, publishing books on *Living with Design* and *Garden Design* in the 1980s.

Hicks's younger daughter, India, has made a name as a model, while his son, Ashley, has gone into the same world as his father, as an architect in private practice in London.

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Swampy gets £100 drug fine

THE eco-warrior known as Swampy has been fined £100 after admitting possession of magic mushrooms.

The 24-year-old former tunneller ran off when he saw the police but said "it's a fair cop" when he was caught and asked to turn out his pockets.

He gave his parents' address in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, as his home address when he appeared before magistrates in Penzance under his real name of Daniel Hooper.

The court heard that on 3 February police had received a complaint of two "travelling men" harassing passers-by for money. As a constable went to speak to them Hooper ran off.

When caught and asked to turn out his pockets he was found with a film canister containing dried psilocybin mushrooms, a class-A hallucinogenic drug in their dried form.



A fair cop: Daniel Hooper, alias Swampy, leaving court with his girlfriend, Jenny, yesterday. Photograph: Sam Morgan-Moore

Lawrence death suspects seen washing off blood

By Kathy Marks

POLICE investigating the murder of Stephen Lawrence were told that four suspects were seen washing blood off themselves on the night of the stabbing. Stephen's father told a public inquiry yesterday.

Neville Lawrence, 56, said his family heard about the incident from a woman who visited their home in Plumstead, south-east London, a few days later. "She said that there had been people in her house on the night of the murder who had washed blood off themselves," he said. "She gave the names of the Accourts, Norris and Knight."

Mr Lawrence said in a statement read out to the inquiry that

he and his wife, Doreen, gave the information to their solicitor, who passed it to police. The inquiry has been told that no arrests were made for two weeks. Charges eventually laid against five men - Neil and Jamie Accourt, David Norris, Gary Dobson and Luke Knight - were dropped before the trial.

In an echo of concerns expressed by his wife last week, Mr Lawrence said he felt that little effort was expended on the investigation. "It was clear to me from the outset that the police had no real interest in catching Stephen's murderers," he said. "For this reason we did not have much confidence in them."

He also criticised the failure of police to communicate with the family. Officers did not speak to them at the hospital on the night of Stephen's murder, he said, and what little information they did have - that he had been attacked in the street - was given to them by a neighbour. "Nobody actually told us what had happened to Stephen," Mr Lawrence said.

The inquiry is examining issues arising from the death of Stephen, who was stabbed at a bus stop in Eltham, a few miles from his home, in April 1993.

Mr Lawrence described a visit to Greenwich mortuary to see his son's body. "My feel-

ings at that point were that I was looking at my son lying there and thinking, what butchers could have done something like this to a human being."

Like his wife, he voiced deep unhappiness with two police liaison officers assigned to the family. On one occasion, one of them, Constable Linda Holden, made a remark about woollen gloves and a hat that were found among his son's belongings. "It was clear that she was implying that Stephen was a cat burglar," he said.

"I felt that they were not sympathetic. The way they spoke to us made us feel as though they regarded us as a nuisance. I felt as though they resented us wanting to know what was happening with the investigation."

Mr Lawrence said that the family felt threatened after youths were seen hanging around outside their house after the murder. "We were very concerned about our children's safety. It was clear that not only were police not going to protect us, but they didn't believe that we were in any danger."

"We were beginning to feel that the killers of my son had more rights than we had. We heard that the killers were being protected."

The inquiry continues today.

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137,000 pupils a year banned from schools

CHILDREN'S chances of being temporarily excluded from school vary sharply depending on where they live and which school they attend, according to a survey published today.

The first national survey of temporary exclusions shows that there are 137,000 a year - a loss of half a million school-days a year.

Government efforts to introduce a consistent policy for schools exclusions have failed, says the Children's Society survey. Exclusions are one of the issues being examined by the social exclusion unit set up by the Prime Minister which is due to report shortly.

The survey's figures show that one secondary school handed out 469 temporary exclusions in a single year, two for every school day. A primary school in the same authority was responsible for 48, one in every school week.

Yet in one big city, there were only 250 exclusions overall. Most of the authorities were able to quote examples of both secondary and primary schools where no pupils had been temporarily excluded in the course of a year.

Permanent exclusions rose

The survey says "These wide variations raise enormous questions about school ethos, coherent policies, social context, recording practices and issues of fairness and equity..."

Questionnaires were sent to 104 local education authorities and 64 returned their forms. Forty per cent had no record of the number of days that temporary exclusions lasted but the survey suggests that the average may be around four days. Nearly two-thirds had no idea how many excluded children were in care.

Ian Sparks, the Children's Society's chief executive, said: "Exclusions carry heavy penalties for us all. The survey reveals a huge range of practice from the very best to the frankly disturbing. Local authorities need basic information about the children they are excluding."

The society says that excluded pupils should remain on the school roll even if they are being educated elsewhere so that schools feel a responsibility to re-integrate them. Schools should get extra money to cope with difficult pupils and there should be a compulsory case conference of parents, teachers and local authority officials before a child is excluded.

DAILY POEM

Threat

By Denise Levertov

You can live for years next door
to a big pine-tree, honored to have
so venerable a neighbor, even
when it sheds needles all over your flowers
or wakes you, dropping big cones
onto your deck at sill of night.
Only when, before dawn one year
at the vernal equinox, the wind
rises and rises, raising images
of cockleshell boats tossed among huge
advancing walls of waves,
do you become aware that always,
under respect, under your faith
in the pine-tree's beauty, there lies
the fear it will crash some day
down on your house, on you in your bed,
on the fragility of the safe
dailiness you have almost
grown used to.

Our poems today and tomorrow come from *Sands of the Well* (Bloodaxe, £8.95), the final volume completed by Denise Levertov, who died last year. Born in Essex in 1923, Denise Levertov moved to the US in 1948, where she published 14 poetry collections and worked as a campaigner for civil rights and against war and nuclear weapons. Bloodaxe also publishes her book of memoirs, *Tesserae*.

It's rough, but even Robert Redford stayed here



STEPHEN GOODWIN
Everest Diary

Namche Bazaar

IT'S SNOWING steadily. The traders of Namche Bazaar have covered over their displays of Tibetan trinkets, carpets and outdoor gear with plastic sheets and are sheltering in shop doorways.

A child smuggled up to her Sherpani mum calls out "allo" to cagouled passers-by but there are few buyers. The forlorn scene is strongly reminiscent of an English seaside resort on a wet day.

No one on the team of our Himalayan Kingdoms Everest expedition is complaining that today is a rest day, or rather an acclimatisation day. After forays round the muddy alleyways while the sun shone briefly, most of the team has retired to the main room of the Khumbu Lodge to read, write postcards or mull over the weather prospects.

Further up our proposed route near a hamlet called Machhermo, at around 4,000m, an avalanche has blocked the way and is being dug out.

We are not due through there for a few more days and the heavy snow is one more reason not to reach Everest Base Camp too soon.

On the plus side, "Barney" Barnicot, one of our guides, remarks that no one woke up this morning with a headache. I know from experience that if I had rushed up from near sea level to sleep at almost 3,500 metres in the Alps an altitude-induced headache would have been a strong possibility. So our leisurely pace seems to be paying dividends.

Khumbu Lodge is a Himalayan climbing institution. At



Peak practice: The route to Namche Bazaar, beyond which, at an altitude of 4,000m, an avalanche has blocked the way Photograph: Joan Klatcho

the heart of the village, its warm-timbered main room boasts photographs of the patron, Pasang Kima - known to all as PK - with Sir Edmund Hillary, who was first to the top of the world in 1953 along with Sherpa Tensing.

In 1991, the American Himalayan Foundation honoured PK as its Man of the Year for his contribution to the rebuilding of the Buddhist monastery at Thyangboche and the hydro-project which supplies the village with electricity.

Signatures of the filmmaker David Breashears on a poster are evidence of visits between 1983 and last year, and

there is also a picture of Robert Redford, who was here in 1981. You can even stay in the Jimmy Carter Room, who was on

The scene is reminiscent of an English seaside resort on a wet day

the mountain Kala Patar in 1985. But even these luminaries would have had to use the same toilets at the back of the lodge when you squat a few me-

tres over an evil pile. Don't drop your wallet.

Most of the lodge visitors however are not bound for the



highest summits but trekking for three or four weeks in their shadow. A scrap of paper on the lodge noticeboard exemplifies the American trekkers

who provide the Sherpas of Namche with an income way above that of most Nepalis. "Grant - Hope you had a nice trek without any headaches and your yak was fluffy and friendly. Yak or Yuki!"

While none of us has suffered any physical headaches, I have certainly been dogged by a metaphorical one in trying to communicate this diary to London. The satellite phone Himalayan Kingdoms has promised for Base Camp has not yet caught up with us and beyond Kathmandu a telephone is a rare sight.

Soon after arriving in Namche I was directed to an army post on a hill overlooking the

village as a possible place to make an international call. The rest of the day was spent in increasing frustration in a small shed where an unimpaired-looking Nepali manned a phone in a wooden box. A Sherpani chattering excitedly for ages into the phone seemed to keep amused most of the group of men, women and children crowded into the hut.

At 6pm the shed was locked and the chance of getting the diary back to London evaporated for another day. Outside chickens scratched around in what may have been the parade ground and it had started to snow.

Thousands of BSE cases 'not reported'

By Kate Watson-Smyth

THOUSANDS of cases of mad cow disease have been covered up by farmers and the Ministry of Agriculture, it was claimed yesterday.

Dr Stephen Dealler, a microbiologist at Burnley General Hospital, claims that only one in five cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) - have been reported to the Government by farmers. He will present his evidence to the BSE inquiry tomorrow.

"Since it became mandatory to report all cases in 1988, the number of reports of BSE to the Ministry of Agriculture has declined when statistically the reporting should have been at a high level," he said.

"There has been a gradual drop in reporting, which I can back up, which suggests that farmers have not been honest about the extent of the problem."

Dr Dealler said the under-reporting was certainly going on until 1996, the last year for which figures are available, and "there is no reason to doubt that this covering up is still going on in the farming community".

He suggested that farmers, who were worried about financial ruin decided to declare clean herds by sending animals for slaughter and rendering at the first sign of BSE.

"That way they would not have to declare they had a BSE problem. Declaring you have BSE leads to a huge financial loss for farmers, which is outweighed by compensation."

Animals sent to the render-

ers are boiled down and turned into powder which is stored at sites around the country. Rendered animals are meant to be BSE-free and the waste material, according to the Government, is safe to store.

But Dr Dealler claimed there could be a health risk if cows with BSE were rendered and their remains stored.

Some of the stores are near water courses and there have been fears that if the rendered powder contained BSE contaminated material it could get into drinking water.

His fears were backed up yesterday by Dr Alan Colchester, a consultant neurologist at Guy's Hospital, London, who said he was concerned about the risks to humans and animals from the rendering process.

Giving evidence to the inquiry, Dr Colchester said infectivity could be encountered in materials associated with rendering and was concerned about Thurstled Mill, a rendering plant near Ashford, Kent which was licensed to receive animals which could have been incubating BSE. There have been four suspected cases of new variant-CJD near Ashford.

"I remain very concerned that the risks to humans and animals from the rendering process and its products have still not been fully evaluated and the precautionary principle is still not being appropriately applied," he said. He was also concerned about the possibility of water-supply contamination as Thurstled Mill lay over an aquifer.

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Taxpayers forked out £2m for defeated MPs

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

THE TAXPAYER forked out more than £2m last year to pay for the office costs of MPs who had already left the Commons.

The payments allowed members who retired or were defeated to walk away with lump sums totalling up to £70,000, on top of pensions of up to £20,000.

The Leader of the Commons, Ann Taylor, has refused to answer an MP's questions about the 1992 election, when the payments are believed to have been even higher. Norman Baker, the Liberal Democrat MP for Lewes, is to appeal against the decision under the Code of Conduct on Open Government.

Although last year's election took place on 1 May, one

month into the financial year, retiring MPs were allowed to continue claiming their office costs allowances until the end of June. Those who were defeated were also given two months' extra payment for accommodation in London.

The bonuses came on top of already generous allowances for MPs leaving the Commons. For example, a 64-year-old with

20 years' service who retired last year was entitled to a £15,865 "winding up allowance" and £43,860 for "assistance with the costs of adjusting to non-parliamentary life". In addition, he could claim up to £11,892 for office costs for the three months after the dissolution of Parliament in April: a total of £71,617.

An MP of the same age and

length of service who was defeated received the same winding-up and adjustment allowances, plus up to £2,047 for accommodation during May and June. He received up to £7,928 office costs allowance after 1 May.

If all the MPs had claimed the maximum office costs allowance – and some incomplete figures released by Mrs Taylor

suggest most did – then the total paid after their leaving dates would have been around £2m.

It is understood that in 1992, MPs were allowed to claim a full year's office costs allowance even though the election took place on 9 April, nine days into the financial year.

Mr Baker said he was writing to David Clark, the Chancellor of the Duchy of

Lancaster, to appeal for more information to be released. A refusal would lead people to assume everyone was milking the system, he suggested.

"It is in MPs' interests that these questions are fully and frankly answered. The replies which I have been presented with do no good to anybody, least of all to those MPs who were defeated or stood down," he said.

Asked how Mr Clark would be likely to respond, a Cabinet Office spokeswoman referred *The Independent* to a parliamentary answer given in December to Mr Baker on freedom of information.

"Ministers should be as open as possible with Parliament, refusing to provide information only when disclosure would not be in the public interest," it said.

Blair's spin doctor labelled control freak

By Fran Abrams

ALASTAIR Campbell, the Prime Minister's press secretary, displayed a "control freak" tendency in the Government when he ticked off two ministers by fax, a senior backbench MP said yesterday.

Mr Campbell is expected to be asked about the incident when he appears before the Commons Public Administration Committee after Easter.

The chairman of the committee, Rhodri Morgan, said the message in the faxes was: "There is only one spin doctor round here and that's me."

"He doesn't want freelance spin doctoring by individual ministers," Mr Morgan said.

In a radio interview, Mr Morgan said the leaked memo to Harriet Harman, the Secretary of State for Social Security, and her deputy Frank Field should perhaps have been worded differently.

In them, Mr Campbell urged the ministers to "enter a period of pre-Budget purdah" and to be careful about lunches with reporters. He also asked why three interviews given by Ms Harman were not cleared through his office.

"Alastair Campbell is a temporary civil servant talking down to ministers and administering a ticking off in this way – unless he had the full authority of the Prime Minister."



Alastair Campbell: 'Nothing surprises or concerns me'

Minister," Mr Morgan said.

Asked what the committee would ask Mr Campbell about, Mr Morgan said: "We will be asking the obvious question that everybody will want to know: to what extent should civil servants such as him write letters like this to ministers unless they have the full authority of the Prime Minister?"

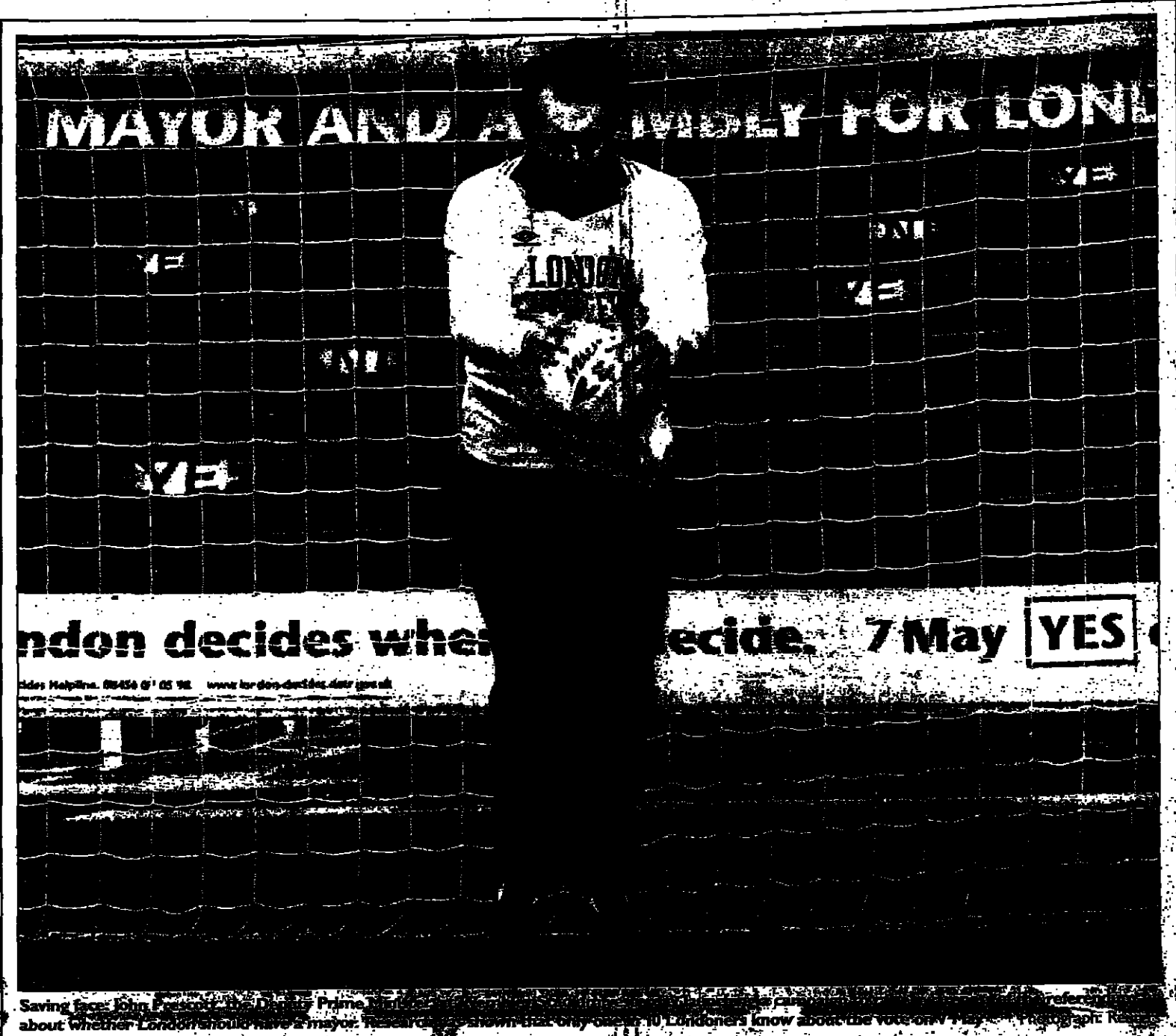
"And if they do have the full authority of the Prime Minister, wouldn't it be better if the memo actually states it?"

He added: "There is obviously a control freak tendency in the new Labour government, but on the other hand, how can a bunch of control freaks, if that's what you think they are, have devolved power to Wales and Scotland and shortly to London?"

After the revelation appeared in newspapers on Sunday Mr Field said that he had been "told off" by Mr Campbell. He had felt it necessary to take the matter seriously as it had been raised by such a senior person, he said, though he had considered returning the memo with its English corrected.

Mr Campbell appeared unruffled by the publicity yesterday. Asked if he was surprised to find that two of his memos had found their way into the press, he replied: "Nothing surprises or concerns me. Or at least, nothing ever surprises me."

"If I had been a minister I think I would have been pretty upset about the tone of those, unless the first line was 'Tony Blair has told me to tell you that you're quarrelling in public and it's time you stopped it, you're playing around' and I'm administering this ticking off on behalf of the Prime Minister."



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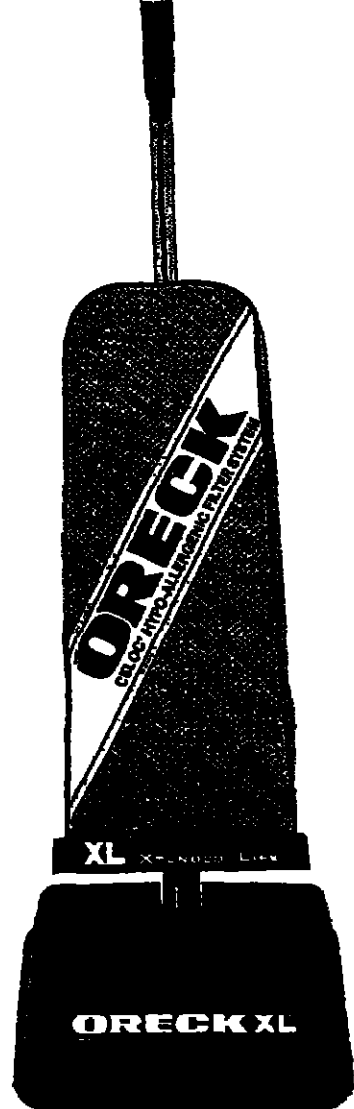
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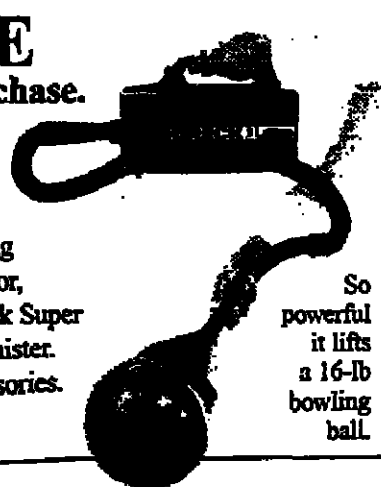
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Davies stakes claim to be first Welsh prime minister

By Tony Heath

RON DAVIES, the Secretary of State for Wales, has staked his claim to become the first prime minister of the principality.

Just before the Labour Party's deadline for nominations to the panel of Welsh Assembly candidates closed at midday yesterday, he handed in his application at the party's Welsh headquarters in Cardiff.

More than 400 names are now on the list, and the process of finding the number down is expected to take several weeks or even months.

The 60-strong body will be elected in May next year – 40, one for each of the Welsh Westminster seats by the first-past-the-post system, and 20 by

proportional representation drawing on party lists.

Mr Davies who represents the safe Labour seat of Caerphilly told a news conference at Transport House in Cardiff: "We must await developments but I am delighted to put my name forward."

He said he had consulted Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, discussed the matter with his constituency party and talked it over with his wife Christina.

At 51, Mr Davies is nearly 10 years younger than Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State for Scotland, who has already indicated that he will leave the Commons and seek election to the Scottish parliament.

Mr Davies, who has long experience in the party, first in

Welsh local government and then as shadow Welsh secretary, is counted a Cabinet success. He lived down a reputation while in opposition as having republican tendencies.

He is credited with successfully steering the devolution debate to a favourable, albeit narrow outcome. That was largely achieved by Mr Davies' ability to bring on board the Liberal Democrats and Plaid Cymru – a trioka that delivered a "yes" vote.

It is understood that Mr Davies will carry on as Secretary of State, and should he go for the Assembly option – almost a foregone conclusion – he intends to continue as a Cabinet minister for "a short transitional period".

"I shall be leading Labour's

Assembly election campaign," he declared.

Two other leading Labour figures are understood to be keen to hold a significant position in the Welsh Assembly. Rhodri Morgan MP for Cardiff West and Wayne David MEP for South Wales Central and leader of Labour's Ewre MPs are both contenders.

With the odds heavily on the Secretary of State taking the "Prime Minister of Wales" mantle, speculation over a successor Secretary of State is beginning to surface. One favoured replacement is understood to be Paul Murphy, MP for Torfaen, who as a Northern Ireland minister has won praise from Mo Mowlam for his contribution to the peace talks.

Electro-lobby plan quashed

PLANS to introduce electronic voting in the House of Commons appeared last night to have been dropped, writes Fran Abrams.

Although the Leader of the House, Ann Taylor, said recently that she was "personally quite keen" on the idea, the Prime Minister's spokesman told reporters yesterday she did not support it.

The issue of swipe-card voting was the only aspect of weekend reports about the modernisation of Parliament which was not comprehensively squashed yesterday.

Downing Street said claims that Tony Blair had blocked the modernisation of the State Opening of Parliament were completely untrue.

The matter was one for the Earl Marshall and not for Ann Taylor, and "to my certain knowledge the Prime Minister has not expressed a view," the spokesman said.

Plans dropped for tax on 'super-rich'

By Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

MINISTERS yesterday abandoned plans to introduce a higher council tax band for the "super-rich" but denied they had backed down on Tony Blair's orders to avoid upsetting the middle classes.

Hilary Armstrong, local government minister, said the idea of introducing a J-band for council tax to impose a higher rate on houses worth more than £320,000 had been studied, but turned down because it would be too expensive to administer. "To simply timber with the top band would have cost as much as it would have brought in." The rate would have caught the "super rich" in mansions but there were fears it would also have increased bills for low-income pensioners living alone in the family house.

Three consultation documents on local government fi-

nance also showed ministers appear to have watered down a commitment to introduce a local business rate by making it clear they will not act without "full consultation with business". There are also no immediate plans for a revaluation of council taxes, to take account of rising property values, which would have left many householders with much bigger bills in the run-up to the general election.

"There are certainly some who would say this is too timid. Some would say it is too radical. It is the job of government to listen to all sides and try and find ... the broadest consensus ... We discovered on the poll tax that people have their limits and it is our job to find a way through this," said Ms Armstrong. The uniform business rate will stay intact and councils will be allowed to levy a supplementary rate on top, subject to government limits.

£8m to tackle homelessness

AN £8m attempt to stop people – mostly young – ending up on the streets, was launched yesterday. Ministers sign to give advice and support to those who risk losing their homes or are already without shelter, writes Glenda Cooper.

The measure was announced as homelessness charity Crisis commemorated its 30th birthday and a couple of weeks before the Social Exclusion Unit is due to report to ministers on homelessness.

Voluntary groups nationwide will receive cash and have key roles in the initiative unveiled by Hilary Armstrong, the housing minister, who said 205 projects, including those encouraging businesses to support charities, would benefit.

Ms Armstrong said: "This Government is determined to tackle homelessness and is committed to reducing the number of people sleeping rough to as near zero as possible," she said yesterday.

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Confident Saddam takes to the road

By Patrick Cockburn

HE IS back in business and looking confident. On Saturday, Saddam Hussein, the Iraq leader who for seven years almost never appeared in public, visited two villages in the centre of the country. Muffled in a heavy coat, he regaled them with tales of his escape as a 21-year-old after he had tried to assassinate General Abdul-Karim Qassem, a former Iraqi president, in 1959.

"It was like you see in the films, but worse," he told the people of Albu Dor, a village

seek another confrontation in a few months.

As Saddam Hussein was conducting his tour - during which he fired a rifle into the air as villagers chanted his name - UN inspectors were for the first time visiting his palace compound in Tikrit, the city from which he and his close family come, in their search for chemical and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them. "Everything went smoothly," said Antonio Monteiro, the Portuguese Ambassador to the UN, who is also chairman of the UN sanctions committee on Iraq.

The inspectors from the UN Special Committee on Iraq, previously known for their aggressiveness, are now accompanied by 20 diplomats as they visit the eight presidential sites. Their presence is part of the deal agreed on 23 February by Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, when he visited Baghdad and met Saddam Hussein. Mr Monteiro said there were many buildings under construction at the Tikrit palace compound. On Sunday the inspectors saw another of Saddam Hussein's palaces in Mosul.

Although Kofi Annan said the diplomats would not reduce the authority of Richard Butler, the head of the UN special committee, the palace inspections appear to be very much under diplomatic control. This will also please the Iraqi government which has accused Mr Butler of confrontational tactics.

The inspectors have now been seen four out of eight palaces. Jayantha Dhanapala, the UN Under Secretary for Disarmament, in charge of the accompanying diplomats, yesterday said: "Fifty per cent of our job is done and we are well on the way to implementing the memorandum of understanding as far as the initial rounds of visits is concerned."

Saddam Hussein's attempt as a student to assassinate General Qassem, during which he was shot in the leg, has often been retold in Iraqi propaganda films. It was the first step in his career in the ruling Ba'ath Party, which overthrew and killed General Qassem in a military coup four years later.



Saddam Hussein: Tales of heroism and bravery

on the Tigris through which he had fled at the time. "My clothes were wet, my leg was injured and I hadn't eaten properly for four days." He added: "How can I describe it? It is hard now to describe how I got out of the water."

The reappearance of Saddam Hussein in public - a month ago he visited villages in Mosul in northern Iraq - is important. It shows he is feeling more confident about his personal safety. He is also convinced that Iraq is escaping from its political and economic isolation. "With God's will your lives will be prosperous and the embargo will end," he said.

A further implication is that the Iraqi leader is not planning a further confrontation with UN inspectors looking for his weapons of mass destruction. At the end of the crisis, which almost led to war with the US and Britain in February, many diplomats assumed he would



Relaunch: The stars of 'Lost In Space' arriving for the film's Hollywood premiere. Shown are (from left) William Hurt, Jack Johnson, Heather Graham, Lacey Chabert, Mimi Rogers, Gary Oldman and Matt LeBlanc. The movie is inspired by a 1960s television series. Photograph: Reuters

Old enemies from Lebanon's civil war unite to maintain the social divide

By Robert Fisk in Beirut

SINCE their 16-year civil war ended in 1990, the Lebanese have piously acknowledged that their country should be deconfessionalised, and that religious barriers can only be broken down by a non-sectarian civil society. That, however, was only for public consumption - as President Elias Hrawi has found to his cost.

As a first, tentative step away from the divisions that cost 150,000 Lebanese lives, he has mildly told his cabinet he intends to introduce civil marriage to Lebanon. After all, couples of mixed faith were being forced to change their religion or fly to Cyprus to marry. Surely a civil wedding would solve the problem.

You would have thought Mr Hrawi was suggesting mass suicide. Muslim sheikhs and Maronite Christian bishops who have been spouting off for years on the need to deconfessionalise Lebanon, roared with anger at this diminution of their power. Outside the office of the Sunni Grand Mufti in Beirut, thousands gathered to scream "Allah akbar" -

God is greater - in protest at Mr Hrawi's proposal.

The Maronite Patriarch, Cardinal Nasrallah Sfeir, announced in a Sunday sermon that civil marriage was against the teachings of the church. Mr Hrawi - the president must always be a Christian Maronite under Lebanon's sectar-

ian system - remains unmoved. He has, after all, uncovered the hypocrisy that lies at the heart of Lebanon's body politic: the desperate need to maintain a sectarian society, so that no religious community feels left out of the system, while maintaining the façade that the country's ultimate aim is to deconfessionalise.

Young people generally welcomed the idea, especially the tens of thousands

who were exiled in Europe during the 1975-90 war and who now resent the demands of parents that they marry into their own community (or change their religion to that of their spouse).

The truth, however, is more ambiguous. For what really worries the religious leaders is not so much marriage

Tracts are now circulating in Lebanese cities. "Today, it's civil marriage - tomorrow it will be the end of religious courts," they say. The Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafiq Hariri - the premier has to be a Sunni Muslim - has refused to countermand the decree, although the speaker of parliament, Nabih Berri (a Shiite) agrees with Mr Hrawi. There are suspicions that Messrs Berri and Hrawi may even have cooked up the whole crisis to force Mr Hariri to resign - which Mr Hariri has no intention of doing - but they also have the Druze leader, Walid Jumblatt, on their side.

Clerics continue to insist on the importance of religious law although its results have often been as preposterous as they are tragic. An old friend of mine who died last year had converted to Islam to marry his wife - but was refused burial in a Christian cemetery by a priest who angrily told his family to find a Muslim grave. The Christian wife of another friend died during the war in the Muslim sector of Beirut; only a Muslim cemetery could be found for her, but the sheikh refused to bury her - until he had posthumously converted her to Islam.

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The truth, however, is more ambiguous. For what really worries the religious leaders is not so much marriage

Berlin airlift divides city again

By Imre Karacs in Bonn

THE SKIES over Berlin will fill again this summer with flying objects of every kind, in salute of the 50th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. There will be a series of commemorations, including a visit by President Bill Clinton, and a military tattoo performed by the Bundeswehr.

There are also plans, appropriately, for an air display, but this particular event has already hit turbulence. According to the screenplay, an international fleet of hydroplanes will take off from the Wannsee, the lake by which West Berliners cool off on hot days. When the hydroplanes are gone, the main attraction will begin: a fly-past of military hardware.

It is the latter, in particular the precise formation, that has triggered protests. For the organisers felt it necessary to invite not only the representatives of Britain, France, the US and Germany, but also of the extinct Soviet Union and its East German satellite.

The choreography envisages an air force jet with East German markings flying side-by-side with the craft of the contemporary - Luftwaffe. They are supposed to be pursued by fighter planes of the four powers which controlled Berlin until German reunification, including a Mig-29 in the colours of the former Evil Empire.

The locals are underwhelmed and the politicians divided. "The participation of the Mig-29 will trigger hostility among many older Berliners," said a Social Democrat spokesman. Yet, the Social Democrats say Russia should be present at the ceremonies.

Their Christian Democrat coalition partners in the regional government are insisting, however, that no Russian aircraft should besmirch the local airspace. The left-wing Greens and the post-communist PDS, meanwhile, are accusing the critics of "Cold War mentality". To them, a Mig flying over Berlin represents peace and security in new Europe.

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China frees man held in cage for five years

A MENTALLY ill man has been freed from a cage where he was held for at least five years by police in southern China after stabbing an officer, an official newspaper said.

Photographs published by the *Yangcheng Evening News* on Sunday showed Deng Qiu being fed through the bars of the coffin-sized cage. Deng, whose plight was publicised by *The Independent* yesterday, was detained 10 years ago after he stabbed and wounded a police officer.

— AP, Peking

Bethlehem mayor dies

ELIAS FREIJ, the mayor of Bethlehem, died on Sunday. Freij, 80, died of kidney and heart failure after being admitted to hospital for dialysis. Bethlehem's mayor for 25 years and a Greek Orthodox Christian, Freij was host to an annual Christmas Eve party outside the Church of the Nativity that drew thousands of pilgrims. When Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat set up an autonomous Palestinian government in 1994, Freij became the first Palestinian minister of tourism.

— AP, Bethlehem
Obituary, page 18

Pope calls for alms for Cuba

PILGRIMS attending a Holy Thursday mass led by the Pope will be asked to make a donation to buy medicines for the sick in Cuba. The Pope, who recently visited the island, called on the United States to end its embargo against Cuba, insisting that trade bans hurt only the poor and sick.

— Reuters, Rome

Norway warned on Rushdie

IRAN has warned that continued contacts between Norwegian officials and Salman Rushdie might further damage relations. The warning was made by a foreign ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi after the Norwegian Prime Minister, Kjell Magne Bondevik, met the writer in Oslo on Friday. Rushdie was visiting Norway to receive an honorary doctorate at Tromsø university.

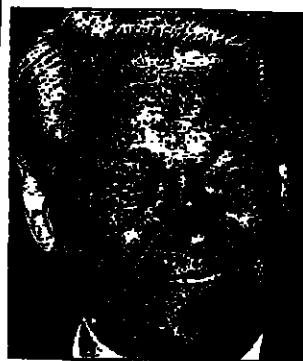
— Reuters, Tehran

Fall kills Timor rebel chief

THE LEADER of rebels fighting Indonesian rule in East Timor died in an accident on the island, Portuguese radio Antena reported. Konis Santana died after falling into a ravine. Jose Ramos Horta, exiled East Timor resistance leader and co-winner of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize, confirmed the report.

— AP, Lisbon

Yeltsin gives disgraced spy chief key post



Boris Yeltsin: Won't stand for president in 2000

By Phil Reeves
in Moscow

BORIS YELTSIN yesterday moved to bring order to the chaos caused by his government cull, by saying he will not run again for office and naming a once-disgraced ex-security service chief as Interior Minister. Despite hints from his aides that he is keeping his options open about a third term, Mr Yeltsin - whose presidency has been overshadowed by ill-health - indicated he will stand

down at the next elections in 2000. His government, fired en masse last week, remains in pieces as his inexperienced new Prime Minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, 35, prepares for a confirmation battle with the lower house of parliament.

All the main parliamentary factions have expressed misgivings about his nomination, and the Communists - who hold nearly a third of the seats - have demanded its withdrawal. A vote is due on Friday. But, as Russia's political

circles reel in the aftermath of the government's sacking, one part of the jigsaw slotted into place. The President named as acting Interior Minister Sergei Stepashin, a former head of the counter-intelligence services notorious for his bungled role in the Chechen war.

The 46-year-old lieutenant-general - appointed Justice Minister last year after the previous incumbent was photographed frolicking in a Moscow steam bath with two women - has remained close to

Mr Yeltsin, despite a patchy career. In September 1994 he led an operation to arm pro-Moscow Chechen opposition forces with tanks, anti-aircraft missiles, and helicopters.

Although he later criticised Russia's decision to send troops into the republic, starting a 21-month war, he is still blamed by rights groups for his role. Among other things, his agency, then called the FSK, supplied the Kremlin with misleading intelligence about the pro-independence forces. In

June 1995 he was sacked after Chechen fighters took 1,500 people hostage in south Russia.

His appointment indicates his links to the intelligence community are valued by Mr Yeltsin, who, mindful no doubt, of the attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev in 1991, has gone to lengths to maintain tight control over the security services.

The minister, whose appointment must be approved by parliament, becomes Russia's chief policeman, a role previously filled by the hawkish

Anatoly Kulikov, sacked last week. Mr Stepashin will hope to see Mr Yeltsin through to the end of his presidency in 2000 - if, that is, the President sticks by his words.

Although Mr Yeltsin indicated he would not be running again, he has a record of contradictory behaviour. If no other candidate stands a chance of victory, and his health holds up, he will be under pressure from the ruling elite to change his mind. For now, Mr Yeltsin has

tentatively aligned himself with Viktor Chernomyrdin, the ex-prime minister, without giving him unqualified backing.

The sacked prime minister would head the government's election campaign, he said yesterday, before meeting the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. "We need a strong leader and, bearing in mind that I, so to speak, am not taking part in the elections, we need reinforcements. That is why we re-arranged the pieces and put everything in place."

No tears in Florida as Black Widow goes to the chair

By Phil Davison
in Miami

"OLD SPARKY", Florida's 75-year-old electric chair, lived up to its name. Smoke wafted from 54-year-old grandmother Judy Buenoano's right leg during the 38 seconds they passed more than 2,000 volts through her body. From behind a glass partition, a dozen witnesses grimaced as the "Black Widow" died.

She was the first woman executed in Florida since a slave called Celia was hanged in 1848 for killing her master. Buenoano was also the first woman to be electrocuted in the United States since 1957. Most states now use lethal injections.

A prosecutor dubbed her the Black Widow because she poisoned her husband for life insurance money after he returned from Vietnam in the Seventies. But that murder appeared almost tame compared with the way she killed her teenage son. He was disabled, wearing leg braces, when she took him on a canoe trip, dumped him over the side and watched impassively as the heavy braces dragged him down and he drowned. She collected \$125,000 (about £80,000) in insurance money, claiming the drowning was accidental.



Judy Buenoano: Drowned son to get insurance money

She also killed a boyfriend with arsenic and tried to blow up another boyfriend with a home-made car bomb, in both cases after taking out life insurance policies on them. She changed her name to the Hispanic version, Buenoano, which means "good year" after her husband, Air Force Sergeant James Goodyear, died.

Perhaps as a result of the nature of her crimes, there was little outcry in Florida or anywhere else over taking Buenoano's life. Unlike Karla Faye Tucker, who was killed by lethal injection in Texas last month, the Black Widow was not photogenic, gave few interviews and did not seek worldwide support for her clemency appeals.

According to witnesses, including police officers, Florida state officials and journalists, she was led into the death chamber at 7.02 am on Monday. A microphone in the chamber allowed the witnesses to hear a prison official ask her if she had any final statement. "No, sir," she replied in a whisper. She then closed her eyes and kept them closed, wincing as the leather straps were tightened on "Old Sparky", which is so nicknamed because its victims had been known to catch fire. The current was switched on at 7.08 and left on for 38 seconds. The witnesses said a puff of smoke drifted from her right leg. At 7.13 a prison official checked her pulse and pronounced her dead.

A day earlier, Florida's Supreme Court had rejected her final appeal for clemency, in which she described the electric chair as "barbaric... belonging to Frankenstein's laboratory". Florida has twice stopped using the chair after victims appeared to catch fire. It was suspended for a year after one death row inmate, Leo Jones, challenged its constitutionality, saying it represented "cruel and unusual punishment". The state's Supreme Court disagreed and Jones was electrocuted last week. Another murderer is due to die in the chair this morning.



Game plan: Bill Clinton out on the trail of elephants in the Chobe game reserve in northern Botswana. The president and his wife Hillary are on safari as part of a three-day holiday in their six-nation African tour

Photograph: Rick Willing/Reuters

Dentist seizes defaulter's teeth

STOCKHOLM (AP) - Pizzeria owner Ridha Bouhail has not been able to sample his wares for four months because a dentist is holding his false teeth in lieu of payment. "For four months I've been living on pasta and soup," Mr Bouhail was yesterday quoted as saying by the Swedish newspaper, *Svenska Dagbladet*.

Mr Bouhail, of Kungälv, 75 miles west of Stockholm, decided in 1996 to have his removable dentures replaced with false teeth attached to screws implanted in the jaw. His restaurant was doing well and he foresaw no problem paying the bill of about £3,125. However, his restaurant receipts began falling. When he went in for the final adjustment to the implants in the lower jaw, the dentist took out the teeth, fearing the bill might not be paid.

Mr Bouhail is not eligible for help from social welfare because he is a private businessman and assistance could be considered by competing pizzerias as unfair, a social services official said. But Olof Edhag, an official at the national welfare board, disagreed. "Everybody should have functioning teeth in Sweden," he said.

Turks rattle scimitar as Europe puts out welcome mat for Cyprus

By Katherine Butler
in Brussels

TURKEY accused the EU yesterday of helping to escalate military tension in the eastern Mediterranean after a ceremony in Brussels marked the formal opening of membership talks with the divided island of Cyprus.

As 26 European foreign ministers representing the Union's present and future members gathered to launch the negotiations, Greek Cypriots were in celebratory mood.

Bouzouki music wafted out of a Cypriot marquee in front of EU headquarters while the members of the public queued for samples of "Cypriot delight" and "Aphrodite" wine from the island's Paphos region.

But in the Turkish capital, Ankara, the move to bestow EU member-in-waiting status on Cyprus was greeted as a provocation which will cement the partition of the island and increase the

threat of military conflict. Furious at being sidelined in its own EU membership bid, Turkey has warned that it will complete the annexation of northern Cyprus; the Turkish Cypriots have

instituted the first step towards escalation in the eastern Mediterranean which could be very dangerous.

In menacing terms Mr Cem added: "No one should be in any doubt about

ot representatives in Nicosia's negotiating team remained open. And Cypriot negotiators, who begin detailed talks with a special EU expansion task force today, denied intending a provocation.

"We cannot under any circumstances accept that opening EU negotiations is an aggravation. This will benefit all of Cyprus," said Giorgos Vassiliou, the chief negotiator.

The crisis over Cyprus may overshadow negotiations for the five most advanced Central and Eastern European states which begin in detail today.

Negotiators from Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovenia will be given full details of the demands they must comply with to be admitted early in the next century.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, chairing the two-day launch, said the meeting was a milestone. "We are finally overcoming the cruel and unnatural division of our continent" he said.

'This marks the first step towards escalation in the eastern Mediterranean... It could be very dangerous'

pulled out of UN-sponsored peace talks in protest. Voicing the anger of a nation which has not been put on the same footing as Romania, or Slovakia, Turkey's Foreign Minister, Ismail Cem, said: "The fact that the EU is treating the Greek-Cypriot administration as the representative of the whole island con-

stitutes the first step towards escalation in the eastern Mediterranean which could be very dangerous."

In Brussels the British EU presidency said the offer of places for Turkish-Cy-

Immigrants crash truck into UN

KUALA LUMPUR (Reuters) - Fourteen Indonesian immigrants demanding political asylum crashed a lorry through the main gate of the United Nations refugee agency in the Malaysian capital yesterday to avoid deportation. The dramatic entry on to diplomatic soil was the latest chapter in Malaysia's troubled efforts to repatriate thousands of immigrants who have filled detention centres.

A representative of an Indonesian rights group said all 14 were from Aceh province, in Sumatra island, the scene of a separatist revolt which peaked in the early 1990s.

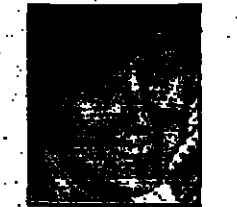
According to official figures, eight Indonesians from Aceh were killed last Thursday during a mass deportation operation carried out by Malaysian police. However, there are reports that at least 39 died either during the operation or of injuries suffered during the deportation. The Acehese say they fear persecution if they return home, and the UNHCR said it was studying requests from the Indonesians in its compound for refugee status. Police said they would not enter the UN compound as it is diplomatic territory.

The UNHCR is due to hold talks with Foreign Ministry officials in Kuala Lumpur today.

Primary colours bring homesick Japanese flocking to the Potomac riverside

IMAGINE what embarrassing footprints your book receipts might leave if something like *Dating for Dummies* or *How to cheat your boss* turned up along with that treatise on American foreign policy. Hardly surprising then that a collective shudder has gone through Washington with the news that detectives are sifting through records of Monica Lewinsky's purchases at two of DC's trendier bookshops. Monica, you will remember, was the recipient of a copy of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* inscribed by Bill Clinton - President Bill Clinton. Her own tastes, it appears, are more corporeal.

WASHINGTON DIARY



Mary Dejevsky

One documented buy was *Vat*, by Nicholas Baker, described as a "thin novel of phone sex between two smart but obsessive young men". The Association of American Publishers

said that searching through receipts was the kind of thing that goes on in Tehran or Baghdad, not in the land of the First Amendment.

YOU would not have thought Washington DC and Kyoto would have much in common. But as March cedes to April, one of the US capital's minor miracles comes to pass; the cherry trees come into full bloom around the Tidal Basin, and the pale blue water reflects a palette of pinks and reds. Local television and newspapers forecast when the blossom show will reach its peak and, if the weekend is sunny, a stream of car-borne

visitors processes slowly around the driveway. If it's tolerably warm as well, homesick Japanese settle among the fallen petals to picnic, making for a little Kyoto-on-Potomac.

IUSED to find it strange that my (American) husband's Manhattan cousin should so delight in frequenting flea-markets and yard sales, a passion pursued also on holidays in Europe. After a year in Washington, I understand perfectly. To patronise flea-markets and private yard sales is an act of sedition. It is a small, private rebellion against the diktat of the new, according to which a good American

feels perpetually obliged to remodel and refurbish - so providing jobs and profits for a whole lot more Americans.

Dazzled by so many colours, styles and qualities of everything - but of a sameness and clumsiness that makes you yearn for Ikea, I, too, can now be found scanning the columns of the *Washington Post* for the weekend's yard sales and setting off for the lawns of the nearer suburbs. So, while most of Washington is milling round the shopping centres, I am rooting around outdoors among their cast-offs.

The world of yard sales and flea markets is a slower, gentler world, where people do not jos-

tle, where they say please and thank you and stop to discuss the latest book or film, their children and their schools. There is room for bargaining - but not too much. And in the flea markets, at least, blacks and whites buy and sell side by side, watching out for each other and teasing in the way market people do, but which white and black Washingtonians otherwise find so difficult.

IT'S a funny thing about the US capital, but you sometimes feel that - in contrast to New York or London or Paris - people are only half-urbanised. They drive slowly and erratically without much

attempt to signal, as though no one else is on the road. The plus is that they are not usually competitive. London-style. Competition is on the pavements.

On London's shopping streets there is scarcely space to walk, let alone face someone down. On Washington's grid of thoroughfares, eye contact is used for one purpose only: to get someone else out of your way. To diverge from your trajectory is to lose face. You "dis" (show disrespect to) someone, or get "disced"; the connotations can be cultural, social, racial. It doesn't make for relaxing walking.

YOU'RE probably fed up by now of hearing about *Primary Colors*, the film that imitates (low) life on the road to the Clinton White House and has not arrived yet in Britain. But in Washington, where it has just opened, it is the social experience of the week. Cinemas are packed and audience participation is raucous. The loudest appreciation for the many one-liners is reserved for trouble-shooter Libby's retort to the would-be President. "I wished we'd castrated you when we had the chance," which is greeted by a chorused roar of "Yeah!" and loud applause.

As clerics face sex abuse charges in Ireland, Clare Garner wonders how much longer the Catholic Church can avoid facing up to reality



Act of devotion: Priests during their ordination in St Peter's Basilica, Rome. Many find the vow of celibacy impossible to keep

Photograph: AP

The priests who fell to Earth

BARELY a week goes by without more lurid headlines reminding us of the depressingly sordid side of the Roman Catholic Church. This week five members of a Catholic order will appear in Galway district court facing a total of 76 charges of abuse.

"All of us sit in dread that something's going to come in the morning post or newspapers," admitted Christopher Budd, Bishop of the Roman Catholic diocese of Portsmouth, who is

responsible for handling the problem of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. "I don't read the *News of the World*, but sometimes I have to."

Yesterday the Christian Brothers, an international Roman Catholic teaching order, came clean about the sexual abuse which has been going on for years in its schools in Ireland. In a national newspaper advertisement, it apologised to any victims "who complained of abuse and were not listened to".

The notion of not being listened to will undoubtedly strike a chord with other victims of abuse by clergy in this country. All too often, the Church's response to sexual abuse allegations is to hope they will go away. Priests are quietly sent off for treatment or moved to another parish. They are not struck off.

Much of the sexual abuse involving clergy occurs in a counselling context. Anyone who leans on their parish priest is entitled to feel that he, of all people, should understand the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship. He has, after all, taken a vow of celibacy. But if the boundaries are crossed and a relationship develops, in many cases the Church refuses to accept vicarious responsibility.

Mary Edwards, an advocacy worker for the Abuse in Therapy and Counselling Support Network, finds fighting cases involving clergy the hardest of all because the Church is so obstructive. "If I take someone to the British Association of Counselling and they find someone guilty, they are struck off. It's a pro-active investigation. With the Church, the situation is no better than with unregistered astrology counsellors," she says.

"How long can one go on saying that the Church is not responsible when it makes every other decision which relates to these men's lives? It just moves them to another parish. That is putting other people at risk."

One of Ms Edwards' clients is Pamela Brown, 43, who turned to her parish priest, Father Terence Fitzpatrick, for counselling about sexual abuse she suffered at the hands of her father. Fr Fitzpatrick, who had accompanied Ms Brown to see the psychologist who had been treating her for mental problems brought on by the abuse, proceeded to coax her into having sexual contact with him.

He has admitted in police statements that Ms Brown's allegations were essentially true, yet Ms Edwards cannot get the Church to assume any responsibility for the damage inflicted on her client. Fr Fitzpatrick is still practising as a priest in four parishes in the Reading area.

The Church has argued the legal aspect of "consenting adults", but last week Bishop Budd commented on the Fitzpatrick case. "I would share your alarm," he said. "Whatever diocese it is may well think: 'It's not children', but we have to be very careful because a lot of adult women are very vulnerable, particularly if they've been abused themselves. I'm surprised he's still in the ministry. As a bishop, I would hope to be more interventionist - get him out of the diocese. He obviously needs help, as indeed does the woman."

"I suppose we've learnt the hard way that abusers don't tend to change if you just move them around."

What action should the Church be taking in terms of treating the known perpetrators - and is there such a thing as a cure for abusing clergymen? Ray Wyre has looked at the problems of sexual abuse as they

relate to the clergy. He was the director of the pioneering and controversial Gracewell Clinic, Britain's only residential centre for sex offenders, in Birmingham, and has devoted his career to working with men like the notorious child murderer, Robert Black. Mr Wyre is internationally recognised for his work with sex offenders, religious and otherwise.

One of the key reasons why the problem of sexual abuse is so acute in the Catholic Church is, Mr Wyre believes, the celibacy rule. Celibacy, he says, should be voluntary. "Priests who were sexually abused as boys see celibacy as a place of safety, but soon discover that they are not going to escape the problem in that way. There is a personality type which likes the concept of never laying with anyone," he said.

"Celibacy is about a choice and a decision about sexuality, not a denial. The moment you repress and deny there can be a problem of how it leaks out. I talk about 'fantasy leakage'. It's amazing how priests' sexual fantasies leak out in the context of women. A lot of priests, once they start to fail sexually, take the attitude 'once I fail I might as well fail'. They target whoever is available - men, women and children."

Mr Wyre believes that some direct instruction at seminaries about the difficulties surrounding sexuality would also help. "You can still train to be



Ray Wyre, who has counselled abusing priests, believes celibacy should be voluntary

a priest without sexuality and celibacy being discussed. Theological colleges should be looking at the issues surrounding boundaries and counselling."

Mr Wyre is astounded by some of the attitudes to sexual sin that he comes across. "You have people in the Church who think masturbation is a greater sin than having a relationship with a child."

Bishop Budd agrees with Mr Wyre that sexually abusing priests are ultimately better served by treatment in a secular, rather than religious, setting. "I think, at a certain stage, the priest has to face quite bluntly - without the cushioning of faith or religion - what he has done."

And in a radical departure from the Church's position in the past, Bishop Budd suggested that abusing priests should pay the price of their ministry. "At the end of the day, someone who has an active faith and wants to discover it in a wholesome fashion has to show repentance. For a priest, that may be to say 'I'll give up my ministry'."

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When April really is the cruellest month

The joys of spring can bring nothing but misery if you suffer from depression, writes Virginia Ironside



Unhappy days are here again: Most of us find blossom time and lighter evenings uplifting, but others find them depressing

Photograph: John Lawrence

"IN THE Spring, a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove; In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love," wrote Tennyson. But there is a group for whom spring is a time of dread and whose minds turn more to suicide than love - they are depressives.

No one knows why there are more suicides in the spring than at any other time of the year, or why agony aunts' post-bags are bulging and psychiatrists' diaries are full. There is vague talk of a change of light having a depressive effect, others feel that the gulf between reality and the depressive mind widens when spring comes. Everything may be full of hope, but this can make the depressive feel worse not better.

As a consequence, with the exception of sufferers from SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), who look forward to the healing sunlight of a new year, spring can be a difficult time for those one in 20 people with a

tendency to depression. But what help can they expect if they go to see their doctor? These days, most psychiatrists agree that there isn't just one answer. They try to treat depression on three fronts: through counselling or cognitive therapy, change in circumstance, or medical intervention.

Counselling or cognitive therapy may help patients get to the root of the depression and sadness and find the tools to fight it on their own. A change in circumstances - a single parent whose father has just died and whose child has Down's Syndrome, for example, may be understandably depressed and could be helped with extra care.

The other form of treatment is anti-depressants. Many people balk at a chemical cure, but if you take 100 people with depression and give them anti-depressants, 70 will make a good recovery. Their reluctance is partly because they do

not really understand these drugs. We take antibiotics if we have a septic throat, we gobble down painkillers if we hurt, but anti-depressants confuse us and, it must be added, confuse a lot of GPs.

This is partly due to the fact that we confuse non-addictive anti-depressants with addictive tranquillisers (which are quite a different ball game), and partly because there appear to be so many of them - 28 different medicines licensed for use as anti-depressants, to be precise.

In the Seventies and Eighties, there was a great deal of prejudice about anti-depressants. Since one of the symptoms of depression is that "everything is my fault", people flocked to counsellors to try to sort out their guilt.

Counselling can be excellent, but no amount of talking can cure a depression with a chemical base. Any depression, with its classic symptoms of sleep problems, waking up in the morning feeling frightful and improving during the day, loss of sexual interest, a feeling that life is pointless, is really worth trying to treat medically.

I am a jangling mess of daily medication - a cocktail of

five different drugs and eight pills a day - but the medication stops me from feeling suicidal. You may not have to take the tablets for more than six months, but it's absolutely crazy not to give them a whirl.

In fact, there are only a few basic families of anti-depressants and it is worth remembering that none of them work by adding anti-depressant chemicals to the brain alone.

The symptoms of depression are thought to be caused by some natural brain chemicals, noradrenaline and serotonin, becoming underactive. Anti-depressants work by increasing the level of these chemicals in the brain, or decreasing others. They usually take between two and three weeks to work, so it is worth persisting with them.

But if they don't work, there is no point just giving up on anti-depressants altogether, because an anti-depressant that lifts one person's depression might have no effect on another sufferer.

Since GPs have only got a basic knowledge of what is available, it is worth asking for a referral to a psychiatrist if what the GP prescribes doesn't work, simply because he or

she knows their subject so much better.

Sometimes a depressed person may be given a cocktail of the drugs described on the right, one of which may work to enhance the action of the other.

Lithium is usually prescribed for cases of manic depression, when people feel incredibly low for a few months and then go into a manic high, often resulting in over-spending, high sex-drive, or wild ideas for new and totally impractical new businesses. If you have lithium, your mood swings should lessen - but you will need regular blood tests to make sure the dosage you are on continues to be safe.

If the anti-depressive drugs fail, there is always ECT - Electro-Convulsive Therapy. Again, people cringe at the thought of it, imagining that they will be in the hands of mad

doctors who will shoot volts of electricity through their brains when they don't know what they're doing. Up to a point, this is true - because they don't know what they are doing. But the other truth is that when someone is so unreachable or acutely depressed that all other treatments have failed, ECT can have miraculous effects.

A friend of mine who suffered from post-natal psychosis and was, quite simply, a zombie, had a few shots and was back to her old energetic self within weeks. With the aid of muscle relaxants, the only convulsions may involve a couple of toes twitching. Any memory loss is nearly always short term.

This treatment works for eight out of 10 people and requires a patient's written consent, unless he or she is so bad that relatives need to sign on their behalf.

ANTI-DEPRESSANTS

Tricyclic anti-depressants: Amitriptyline (Tryptizol); imipramine (Tofranil); clomipramine (Anfranil); Dothiepin (Prothiaden); Lofepramine (Gamanil). These have been around for about 30 years and are sometimes given for anxiety or to help people sleep. **SSRIs - selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors:** Fluvoxamine (Faverin); sertraline (Lustral); paroxetine (Seroxat); fluoxetine (Prozac). These anti-depressants have only been available in the UK since 1988. They can be used to treat eating disorders as well as depression. Prozac is the most famous, but though it works marvellously for some people, it may have no

effect on others or produce unpleasant side-effects. **MAOIs - monoamine oxidase inhibitors:** Isocarboxazid (Marplan); phenelzine (Nardil); tranylcypromine (Parnate). These have been available for about 30 years and work by deactivating an enzyme in the brain called monoamine oxidase. They also affect other parts of the body, so it is wise not to eat anything with tyramine in it, such as pickled herrings, caviar, Marmite, Chianti, or cheese or broad bean pods. **Other anti-depressants:** Venlafaxine (Efexor); L-tryptophan (Optimax), a naturally occurring chemical that we all take in small quantities in our diet; and flupenthixol (Fluanxol), a major tranquilliser which also acts as an anti-depressant.

Itchy rashes and sticky moments



DR PHIL HAMMOND

OF LATE, readers have been sending me a considerable number of problems and queries. Alas, I haven't got time to answer them in person, but I'm quite prepared to pad out the occasional column with those selected at random from a large, home-made tombola I keep under the stairs.

I've developed a rash of small blisters around my body hair and it itches like mad. Could this be anything to do with the jacuzzi at my health club?

Monty, Bath
Yes, Monty, it could, but I'd need to see it to be sure. It sounds like you've got what President Clinton might call "hot-tub folliculitis". This is an infection of the hair-follicles caused by pseudomonas, a bacteria which thrives in poorly chlorinated whirlpools. Get the management to check the levels and avoid the hot tub if it looks cloudy. On the other hand, it may be caused by a fungus or staphylococcus and have nothing to do with your health club. Either way, you need treatment, so pop along to your GP. Alternatively, you can fax me your rash on 0171 293 2451.

Can I lose weight by sleeping?
Anne, Leeds
In theory, yes. To keep ticking over, your

body burns off a mammoth 65 calories an hour when you're asleep, so provided your daily consumption doesn't exceed this (ie 1,560 calories per 24 hours), you'll lose weight. However, there is a downside to spending all your life in bed (muscle wasting, pressure sores, pneumonia, body odour, etc) and at the very least, you'd have to pay someone to turn you at regular intervals. I'd recommend interspersing your slumber with a bit of light movement.

I've got asthma, so I have switched from feather-filled pillows to synthetic ones. Like I was told to by my GP. Trouble is, I'm even more wheezy now. Why?

Sally, Glasgow
The theory behind the switch was that feathers make asthma worse for some patients. Unfortunately, we now know you're more likely to be worse on a synthetic pillow because the house-dust mite, which triggers many attacks, prefers man-made bedding. So, switch back.

I suffer dreadfully from premature ejaculation and I think my girlfriend may have noticed. Any suggestions?

Colin, Bishop's Lydiard
Well, Colin, some partners like it quick because it avoids all that nasty grunting business - so it may not be a problem at all. Indeed, the 1978 Hite Report of 11,239 men found that 21 per cent come within a minute and a further 62 per cent before five. If you do want to prolong the agony, you will have to increase your tolerance to sexual excitement. "Holding back" usually doesn't work, unless you can conjure up a particularly vivid picture of Jimmy Nail, and penis-training is generally called for. The following method was described by a bloke called Semans (I kid you not). All you need is a partner and some lubrication.

1) Ask your partner to bring you to the brink manually. When this point is reached, ask her to squeeze tight just underneath the glans (or cherry, as we doctors call it). When the urge has gone, relax and repeat the process allowing yourself to make a

mess on the fourth go (you can try this alone, too).

2) Repeat the above using a lubricant such as as KY jelly to simulate vaginal intercourse. A blindfold helps, too.

3) Use this stop/start method for intercourse with your partner on top. Put your hands on her hips to guide her motions, stopping when you're nearly there. Again, let go on the fourth occasion. With time and training, your "brink interval" will increase and you'll feel confident to start thrusting again. Note: The Semans method works best if you both have a sense of humour and worst if only one of you has.

Does black coffee sober you up?

June, London
Yes and no. Caffeine is a stimulant that increases your alertness but it is also, like alcohol, a diuretic (ie: makes you pee) and can make your dehydration worse. Contrary to popular belief, it does nothing to speed up the breakdown of alcohol in your blood - it takes an hour to metabolise each glass of wine or half pint of normal strength beer - so you can't drive for at least 12 hours after a session, no matter how many double espressos you've had.

Why does my doctor go "Pop" all the time?

Suey, Birmingham
I presume you mean say "pop" rather than flatulate loudly. Pop is perhaps the most overused word in medicine. Look, I even used it in my first answer. An average morning surgery would include "Pop behind the curtains", "Pop up onto the couch", "I'll just pop in the thermometer/speculum/other cold piece of metal", "Pop to the loo", "Pop the sample into reception" and "Pop back in a week's time". I've no idea why we do it, but you should be thankful you've got a GP who speaks to you at all.

Please don't send any more problems to Dr Phil at The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

Phil Hammond's 'Trust Me, I'm a Doctor' is on BBC2 tonight at 8pm.

STUDENT CHOICES

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Back to the roots of Rolls-Royce

THIS NEWSPAPER is pleased that Rolls-Royce has been bought by a German firm. We are grateful too - Britain has lost ownership of another national institution. But what matters more is that good engineers and good business brains, backed by a really strong company, should save and rebuild a faded glory: that British jobs are saved and created. Today, in the absence of an independent British car manufacturer of any serious scale, that meant a foreign owner. A German one is fine.

The success and failure of Rolls-Royce is a parable of much else in 20th-century British manufacturing history. The company has "crafted" (as they call it) some of the most beautiful cars with some of the most evocative names in motoring history - Silver Ghost, Silver Cloud, Phantom, Wraith. The cars have been owned by heroic figures like John Lennon and Lawrence of Arabia, although Denis Thatcher was perhaps a more typical customer. Good old-fashioned engineering, selling on romance, a liberal splash of snobbery. But then came the rub: to those in the know, Rolls-Royce ceased to make the best cars in the world some time back. It didn't innovate. It stuck with obsolete forms of production. Its marketing strategy was awful.

Luckily for Rolls-Royce enthusiasts, BMW's chairman, Bernd Pischetsrieder is quite a sentimental soul himself. When he bought Rover Group from British Aerospace he seemed to take the same satisfaction in acquiring a range of revered British marques that a little boy might when building his collection of Dinky toys. He was said to be particularly pleased that he would have the opportunity to revive Riley (deceased 1969) and Triumph (deceased 1983). What else could you expect from the distant cousin of Sir Alec Issigonis, inventor of the Austin Mini? More to the point is the substantial investment of £45m BMW is making in developing a new Mini range, greatly expanding Land-Rover, revamping the middle-range Rovers and other projects. The purchase of Rolls-Royce is built on more than a drive to complete Bernd's collection of British classic car badges. Like the developments at Rover it is about making money, by restoring Rolls-Royce's technical pre-eminence.

Pischetsrieder and BMW have more reason than most to know about Rolls-Royce's more recent failings. BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Japanese luxury makes such as Lexus have been making, or crafting, faster, safer, better-handling, more advanced, more reliable, even quieter and more comfortable cars than the Rolls-Royce. They have been catching up.

It would be a crude but useful simplification to say that Rolls-Royce cars have been living off their past. The new Seraph is the first new design in 18 years. Probably the worst thing that happened to the Rolls was that the likes of Elvis Presley and Bernard Manning decided that they would show off in one. Once the temptation, however slight, came to sell cars effortlessly to the undiscerning affluent, the rot set in. A nice steady market of pools winners, entertainers and embassies is fine. But it does leave the marque open to a slightly vulgar and old-fashioned image and dulls the competitive urge.

Developing new models to conform to ever-stricter legislation and ever more demanding customers is very expensive. It is no longer good enough to build a big car with lots of leather and walnut. The next generation of Rolls-Royces and Bentleys will have to be class leaders in safety as well as performance and be environmentally friendly as well as comfy. BMW know all about this and already supply engines and other components for the newer models. BMW are taking their investment seriously. They are taking Rolls-Royce back to its roots.

When Henry Royce, the engineer, met the Honourable Charles Rolls, the entrepreneur-adventurer, almost a hundred years ago, they found that they had a shared interest in building a car that would be ahead of its time, not simply an imposing piece of conspicuous consumption. It would have been next to impossible for Rolls-Royce's last British parent, Vickers, to make Rolls-Royce ahead of its time now. Both the Rolls-Royce and Bentley badges have enormous scope to be leaders in many segments of a more fragmented car market. There are new niches appearing with every motor show. Why shouldn't there be a new smaller sports model? Or a luxury 4-wheel drive vehicle like the Range-Rover? When Jaguar and Mercedes are planning or building smaller models, what would be wrong with a family saloon Rolls-Royce, the ultimate luxury rep-mobile?

BMW has spent £380m buying Rolls-Royce and will doubtless be investing much more. But that is the best way of ensuring that, as Henry Royce once famously put it, "the quality remains long after the price is forgotten". Rolls-Royce Motors has a silver future. *Vorsprung durch Technik*, as they say in Crews.

Seeing the light

THERE ARE, at the last count, some 6.75 million lamp posts in the United Kingdom. A dog's dream, perhaps, but also a major untapped advertising opportunity. Yesterday the billboard giant Mills and Allen announced a pending deal with councils to put adverts on lamp posts for the first time.

It's not a new idea. Where would traditional Parisian streetscapes have been without their piers and those round, green things bearing yellowing posters for Charles Trenet concerts. British streets hardly lack for advertising, though most of it is of the boringly official kind, such as those complicated placards - on lamp posts - telling when parking is permitted. On some urban streets there is now a jungle of hardware, and a few colourful ads on lamp posts are not going to make them any more untidy. Indeed you could say that advertisers are being somewhat unadventurous.

Once, in those far-off days when members of the Labour Party used to call themselves socialists, presumably on the grounds their dealings with capitalists banks were highly imaginative, councillors in one borough even flagged off their entire stock of lamp posts, albeit on a sale-or-return basis. Why not have companies sponsoring lamp posts and decorating them in their favourite colours? Urban dog owners could then take special pleasure by encouraging Rex to relieve himself against, say, the Virgin or British Airways or (fill in your own corporate favourite) lamp post.



MILES KINGSTON

A MOST unusual case is being heard at the High Court at the moment, in which a Mr Sam Profitore stands accused of infringing the country's obscenity laws. There are some very complex legal points at stake, as this extract from the first day's proceedings shows.

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hopper unaccompanied, and without rope and climbing tackle.
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Judge: Yes, he has... Mr Profitore, are you the maker of one of my favourite instructional farm videos called *The Vet Always Rings Twice*?
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Judge: I am glad to hear it. I often wondered. Carry on!
The case continues.

THE TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE HEARS ANOTHER WITNESS...



LETTERS

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Bug foreseen

MUCH has been and will be written on the subject of the "Millennium Bug". In due course the hunt for scapegoats will commence.

Of course, thoughtful programmers have understood the issue ever since they began to store dates in computers. I certainly remember discussing it with colleagues in the early 1980s, and the plot of Arthur C Clarke's 1990 novel *The Ghost from the Grand Banks* (about raising of the *Titanic*) included an economic collapse caused by the bug.

But perhaps that was the problem: to talk too openly about the year 2000 would not have been a wise career move. Managers would assume you were either some sad nerd who read science fiction novels, or a crazed eco-fanatic with delusions about the ozone layer, or just a pedantic perfectionist with no grasp of business realities.

Many of the "fixes" being proposed today will break down at a later date, such as 2030. Few people seem to be worried about that. STEPHEN LOWE WATSON
Lewes, East Sussex

IN VIEW of Tony Blair's latest initiative to defuse the imminent "technical time bomb" in our computers, isn't it time the public were alerted to a far greater threat?

I refer to the software fault which, with exquisite and correct logic, is going to hold back from its *fin-de-siècle* crashing of the world's computers until 31 December 2000. It is, of course, the Pedantic Millennium Bug. MICHAEL DINES
London SW13

Tight money

I AGREE with Gavin Davies's overall conclusion that the Budget was a step in the right direction (Business Comment, 23 March), but on three points he overstates his case.

First, he criticises the Bank of England's "puzzling failure to pursue a firm domestic monetary stance since the election". In fact,

the Bank did raise interest rates steadily last year, resulting in real short interest rates of around 4½ per cent at present, which is high by historic standards. Added to the continued strength of sterling, monetary conditions are now quite tight and will act as a significant drag on growth this year. This has added to the risks of a hard landing and it is heartening, rather than puzzling, that the Bank is taking this risk seriously in weighing up the case for a further rise in interest rates.

Second, he argues that the failure of the significant fiscal tightening introduced in the July 1997 Budget to slow domestic demand "should be a salutary lesson to staunch believers in fine tuning". In fact, this can be attributed both to lags in the system and the fact that the fiscal tightening, although large, was not well targeted on the consumer.

Third, he states that "cuts in corporation and business taxation are intended to boost the level of business investment in the UK", which the Treasury has rightly said is inadequate. In fact, the net effect of the 1998 Budget will be to raise the corporate tax burden from next year by around £1bn per annum. This comes on top of the removal of dividend tax credits for pension funds last year, which increased the corporate cost of capital. All these measures, although justifiable from a long-term perspective, will tend to reduce total UK corporate investment over the next few years.

By further encouraging share buy-backs, they may also have added to a share price bubble that looks increasingly unsustainable given the recent slowdown in corporate profits growth. JOHN HAWKSWORTH
Head of Macroeconomics
Coopers & Lybrand
London WC2

Cost of disability

VIRTUALLY all the discussion of disability, whether by official spokesmen or by unofficial commentators, misses the point. What most of us need is not a higher income, whether from allowances or from salaries, but a better opportunity to lead a normal life.

For example, my disability living allowance doesn't help me to do my job, because the obstacles are not financial but physical. It is difficult and often impossible for me to use public streets and public transport, buildings and offices, and so on, because they have little or no wheelchair access.

Despite the inevitable cries of protest from pressure groups and political sects, the best way forward would be a combination of radical reform of the clumsy system of benefits, so that they would be based on genuine need and subject to reasonable tax, and of a real programme of providing a decent environment to live and work in. NICOLAS WALTER
London N1

National games

I AM surprised that Lord Gordon of Strathblane (letter, 25 March) cannot see the difference between Premier League football - essentially played between local teams even if some have wider support - and Test cricket which, as an international contest, still carries a significant weight of national pride and interest from a great many who are not regular followers of cricket.

There will be many like myself who do not wish to be blackmailed into subscribing to cable or satellite channels, or who cannot afford to do so. But the real issue here is the place in our national life of a unique and remarkable game. Public service broadcasting has a symbolic signifi-

icance as well as the practical one of providing access to the widest possible audience. By placing events which rarely involve national players above events involving our national team, Lord Gordon's Advisory Group is saying something about cricket which will do nothing to further its cause or raise standards of play.

No doubt many, including the England and Wales Cricket Board, will point to the large sums of money that will be drawn into the game from satellite broadcasting, but there are problems with cricket in this country which cannot be solved merely by money. JOHN BURCHELL
Old Coulsdon, Surrey

Arts Council row

DAVID LISTER (Arts Council sheds half its members", 25 March) implies that the Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman) found fault with Arts Council of Great Britain's decision to cease funding the Kosh. Nothing could be farther from the truth: the Arts Council won the ruling, not the Kosh.

In addition, Michael Merwitzer of the Kosh implies in his letter (24 March) that the Ombudsman would agree that the Arts Council is run by "only knaves and fools". The Ombudsman drew no conclusion of that sort, and stated clearly that the decision taken by ACOB in December 1993 was not maladministrative.

The Ombudsman did identify some shortcomings in the Council's provision of feedback to the Kosh, but suggested that a written apology would be sufficient remedy. The Arts Council complied readily and immediately. GRAHAM DEVLIN
Deputy Secretary-General
The Arts Council of England
London SW1

Hereditary peers

WHAT is going to replace the broad knowledge of affairs that is available from the present peerage, if hereditary peers are to be removed from the councils of the realm?

As Edmund Burke said: "Persons nurtured in office [that is, in the law and politics] do admirably well, as long as things go in their common order; but when the high roads are broken up, and the waters out, when a new and troubled scene is opened, and the file affords no precedent, then it is that a greater knowledge of mankind, and a far more extensive comprehension of things, is requisite than ever office gave, or than office can ever give."

What guarantee can the Government give us that the "greater knowledge of mankind" available in the present House of Lords will not be replaced by the more narrow view of "office holders"? A F STOBART
Ludlow, Shropshire

Why read?

ANNE BARNES, general secretary of the National Association for the Teaching of English, no less, says "the point of reading is to enjoy a good story" ("Tough words to test our children", 21 March).

What happened to the exchange of ideas, development of argument etc, or have teachers of English retreated to the story corner in the reception class? M K FINN
Lichfield, Staffordshire

A Tory's vision

YOUR claim (leading article, 30 March) that the Conservative Party has "no vision to enthuse members and potential members" struck me as less than fair. I joined the Conservative Party on 2 May 1997. New Labour, New Britain and Blair's egregious opportunism was the vision I needed. HUGH DERBYSHIRE
Warral, Merseyside

Caught on video: the strange case of the buttercup massacre

A MOST unusual case is being heard at the High Court at the moment, in which a Mr Sam Profitore stands accused of infringing the country's obscenity laws. There are some very complex legal points at stake, as this extract from the first day's proceedings shows.

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John Prescott, saviour of rural England? Don't laugh



FIONA REYNOLDS

ON SAVING THE GREENBELT

ARE YOU shocked by this week's news that huge numbers of houses are to be built on the south-east's precious green countryside? You shouldn't be. Despite John Prescott's recent change of policy on housing and urban developments, we are still trapped in an economic system that favours development on fresh greenfield sites rather than restoring our cities. Until this policy changes, too, both town and country will continue to suffer.

We can get much more housing into our urban areas that we have done for the past few decades. Mr Prescott has set an initial target of at least 60 per cent of all new homes to go there - better than the 50 per cent we have been managing, but not as good as the three-quarters some think is feasible.

Is it? Yes, and we can rebuild decent housing in our towns and cities without returning to the horrors of tower blocks, or wiping out precious urban open spaces. We can do it by cleaning up abandoned urban land and restoring run-down buildings. But - and here comes the catch - none of this will be possible without a whole new approach to policy, investment and the economics which drive change.

Developers and many of their customers still much prefer greenfield sites. The land is clean and uncluttered by rubble or obsolete buildings. You can get plant and materials there easily. And the final product has all the advantages of shiny newness. Every week, according to new evidence, 1,700 more people leave cities and towns for the country, than go in the other direction. Many of them are simply searching for a better life, in a cleaner, nicer area. Businesses are engaged in the same trek from the inner cities to their fringes. Not only are these allowed by local authorities, they are marked as the "in" places to work. We are all living even more car-dependent lifestyles, commuting further between home, work and school, leisure and shopping venues.

But politicians are not. When John Prescott returned from Kyoto, where he helped negotiate the first-ever cut in CO₂ emissions by the western world, the irony of what was happening at home seems to have struck him. He saw that we were locked into a "predict and provide" approach: first predict household growth and then provide land for houses to meet those projects, without really questioning the numbers.

In no other area of public policy are we doing the same. Of course, if you build new houses in attractive places they will be occupied in preference to those in run-down areas. Yet, we plan for the future as if it has to be just like the past - even to the extent of assuming that tens of thousands of people will (and should) continue to leave urban areas every decade. Remorselessly, that leads to the destruction of much of the last of green England.

So, his new policy, of abandoning the "pre-

dict and provide" approach and setting a target for more new housing is a significant improvement. But it is not enough. The key economic signals have not changed.

For example, we pay VAT on refurbishment and repair but not on new housing. That means that it is still more expensive to reclaim and to restore previously developed land than to develop a greenfield site. The prestige associated with out-of-town development persists - local authorities and property developers still market pristine business parks covered with shiny tin sheds on the bypass in preference to urban locations. And people are still leaving urban areas - taking with them entrepreneurial skills, innovation and enthusiasm, and leaving behind those who have neither the choice about where they live nor the resources to improve their own environment.

There is so much that has to change - and fast, if we are not to compound the ills of the past. Towns and cities are the heart of modern society and the places, still, where nearly 80 per cent of us live. Yet, too many people live there as if on sufferance.

I am not saying that, therefore, we should be forcing all new building onto empty urban sites. In some places this does need to happen - there are sites, long vacated by heavy industry that could provide homes and other facilities for many thousands of people. But we should imagine the remaking of our cities as a continuous process - a bedraggled Victorian terrace being restored for housing and local shops, a factory site turning into a community centre with small workshops, an old school becoming a workplace for an IT company, a church being used for a children's nursery and arts centre, offices built for a market which never arrived being converted into flats for the elderly, new houses and business units being constructed on wasteland.

This is, perhaps, the most sustainable industry it is possible to imagine - it will go on forever, and we need it to: continually reviving and restoring what is useful from the past but also providing for new communities and the infrastructure they need. This is the mission Lord Rogers's task force, set up by John Prescott, needs to lead: not just totting up an inventory of empty sites, but championing the cause of regeneration. With the passing of the "smokestack" industries, we do not need to separate homes and workplaces. We can plan anew for communities with a high range and quality of services within walking distance.

So, Prescott's vision of an "urban renaissance" is absolutely right and necessary. We really have no choice but to provide towns and cities where people can live rich, rewarding lives in ways that are not dependent on long car journeys, the consumption of huge amounts of natural resources (including land) and which maximise the benefits that can be provided through mass provision of public transport, the arts, leisure services and other facilities.

If it seems like reinventing the wheel, then that is an urgently needed task. Restoring city life is one way of avoiding the emerging gulf between town and country. The needs of town and country remain different, and should be celebrated as such. The urban renaissance offers the chance to meet them without imposing uniformity or standardised solutions. But this is the beginning of an historic argument, not a finished deal. Mr Prescott needs to convince his colleagues to provide the economic framework and services which will help the urban renaissance to take real and enduring shape. Only then will the endless turf wars between shrinking green Britain and remorseless suburban sprawl end. Can Labour deliver?

Fiona Reynolds runs the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

Why I read, watched, listened - and then passed Lolita for cinemas



ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH

BRITAIN'S NEW FILM CENSOR

I COULD have wished for an easier task as the new president of the British Board of Film Classification than having to make a decision about *Lolita*, an adaptation of Nabokov's novel in which Jeremy Irons plays Humbert, the schoolgirl's middle-aged lover.

But I started at the beginning - by re-reading the novel. It is more shocking today than it was when first published in 1955, because the widespread incidence of paedophilia was then unknown. Nobody could forget the theme, if only because the word, "Lolita" has entered the language: the Oxford Dictionary defines a "Lolita" as a "sexually precocious schoolgirl".

Yet, during the 30 years that had passed since I first read it, my memory had become blurred. I had forgotten the famous opening line which Irons speaks so well in the film: "Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin. My soul." Nor did I remember Nabokov's careful, if lyrical definition of a nymphet, the sole object of Humbert's sexual desires: "Between the age limits of nine and 14 there occur maidens who, to certain bewitched travellers, twice or many times older than they, reveal their true nature, which is not human but nymphic (that is, demoniac).".

In fact, those two passages, taken from the opening pages of the novel, encapsulate the main issues for classification. "Fire of my loins" is the first indication of the erotic charge that runs powerfully through the novel and the film. But note that the phrase is immediately followed by the reference to sin.

Innumerable ways, the doomed, mutually destructive, criminal nature of the liaison is repeatedly marked. The age of Lolita is important, too. In the novel, she is 12 and a half. In Stanley Kubrick's earlier version with James Mason as Humbert, Lolita looked 16 to 17 years old. And finally, there is the description of paedophiles as "bewitched travellers" and the parenthesis "demoniac".



Bewitched: Jeremy Irons and Dominique Swain as Humbert and Lolita in Adrian Lyne's film

Here Humbert is pleading that Lolita was literally irresistible and such self-justification is also a feature of the book and the film - and of paedophiles in general, who rarely blame themselves for the crimes they commit.

The film sticks pretty closely

examiners had already evaluated the film. It's a painstaking process. The examiners work in teams of two. If there is disagreement at the first viewing, or uncertainty, then a second team has a look. In important cases such as *Lolita*, every examiner, of whom there are 15

or no certificate at all - in effect a ban - has to be justified. Restrictions depend on the notion of harm - harm to children and young people, harm to society generally. On *Lolita*, we were grappling with problems such as: had the film's pleasures been set up in too powerful a way? In other words, did we empathise with Humbert or take the story for the cautionary tale it seems to be? Is the critical comment on Humbert's behaviour strong enough to be heard above the overt messages that there is a "paradise" in a child's sexuality?

All the time, the central problem loomed over us: was the risk that paedophile behaviour would be encouraged by *Lolita* so great that the film should be banned? On that, apart from the experience and informed common sense of the examiners, we needed specialist help.

I watched *Lolita* for a second time in the company of two psychiatrists who work with children - and one had also done quite a lot of work with paedophiles. I also met police officers who deal with child-abuse cases. And we got legal advice from the leading counsel in the field. My role was to test this array of opinion and advice and then to come to a conclusion.

I asked the examiners what would have made them unanimous that the film should be banned. Then, I asked the opposite question - seeing that we witness such relatively restrained sexual relations on the screen, why should the film not be granted a "15" or even a "12" certificate? I tried, courteously, to bully the two psychiatrists into saying that the film was likely to cause harm. But they, with equal politeness, refused to be budged from their opinion that it would not do so. The police told me that paedophiles' sexual images of all kinds, some of which may appear more or less harmless to the rest of us, such as pictures taken from sales catalogues.

Finally, the decision: pass at "18". Put out a press release. "Unlike to encourage paedophile behaviour or put children at risk... the film, like the book, abounds with indications that the breaching of what is a necessary social taboo is wrong... the new *Lolita* is a challenging and compassionate treatment of an established literary classic which adult cinema goers have a right to judge for themselves." Wait for the media storm to break. And wait for the film to open and see whether people think we were right.

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to the novel, except in one important respect. Adrian Lyne, the director, has raised the age of Lolita to 14 (played by a 15-year-old actress with a 19-year-old body double used where necessary).

So, how did we deal with all that? When I took up my part-time appointment at the beginning of the year, the Board's

or so, will be asked to prepare an analysis. What, then, is the role of the president? Cinema classification is done in the names of the president and of the director - our signatures flash up briefly as the certificate is displayed on the screen. As "responsible authorities" in law, we are in a similar position to a newspaper editor. You are legally responsible but you cannot see everything.

Over the years, the Board has developed principles of classification, but the starting point is always the same: why should this film for the cinema or video work not have a "U" or universal certificate? Each successive restriction, "parental guidance", "suitable for persons of 12 years and over" and so on,

How the Tories could outflank Labour



DONALD MACINTYRE
ON THE HOUSE OF LORDS

DISRAELI IS back in fashion. William Hague spent quite a lot of his weekend speech in Harrogate trying to rehabilitate him - and particularly to remind Britain that Disraeli's most famous, and most posthumously over-worked, notion of "one nation" was originally a Tory one.

But Disraeli is as Disraeli did. And, in fact, Hague is in danger of ignoring the lessons of one of the great Tory's most stunning electoral coups. The issue is Labour's programme of constitutional reform; and the Tories are at severe risk of missing a historic opportunity. I mean historic. In 1867, Lord Derby's Tory administration spectacularly trumped the Liberals at Disraeli's instigation by doubling the franchise. The Conservatives won the next election and Disraeli became Prime Minister. He out-radicalised the radicals. Could it happen again?

Last week, the Shadow Cabinet held its first lengthy - a full three hours, according to those who took part - discussion of what to do about Lords reform. It considered a proposal which was repeatedly referred to during the debate as "the Disraeli option". And then, for the time being at least, rejected it.

In this case, the "Disraeli option" would have been for the Tories similarly to trump the Blair government by coming up with their own proposals for an elected second chamber. That would have meant unequiv-

ally accepting that the Government was going to abolish hereditary peers - a big admission - but that the party now had a real chance to open serious negotiations about the introduction of an elected second chamber.

This had been proposed in a newspaper article that very week by the backbencher Andrew Tyrie. One attraction was that Labour would have had to negotiate. If ministers were serious about their ambitions for more than an appointed Upper House - the "Superquango" - their critics accuse them of planning - then they could hardly refuse the Tyrie offer of talks, if only to overcome the fiendish complexities of legislating for an elected second chamber. And if ministers were not serious, then they would be exposed. The choice would be seen to be, as Tyrie had put it, between "Labour quangocracy and Tory democracy".

Instead of embracing this strategy, however, the Shadow Cabinet allowed Lord Cranborne, the Tory Leader in the Lords, to continue his present tactics. Anything else, it was feared, would lead to a Tory split.

At first glance, the current plan looks rather similar to what Tyrie was suggesting. In reality it is nothing of the kind. Officially, Lord Cranborne wants the Government to table detailed proposals on an elected Upper House before deciding

whether some form of cross-party negotiation would be worthwhile. The private talks he has been holding with Lord Richard - leaked by the Tories - reinforce the impression of co-operation.

Unofficially, though, it looks increasingly as if this is simply a delaying tactic which would give the Tories in the Lords some cover for opposing the abolition of hereditary peers. If the Government did produce its paper, then Lord Cranborne

the Tories from wrecking such a bill. That means, I believe, that Hague has very little to lose by seriously promoting a second stage of reform. Especially as, contrary to conventional wisdom, ministers are more open to the idea of a democratic second chamber than they seem. Key ministers, including, I suspect, Lord Richard, the Leader of the Lords, and Lord Irvine, who chairs the all-important Cabinet committee on reform, are more seized of

A public punch-up with his own hereditary peers could be just what Hague needs to sharpen his profile and show he is a modern leader

would, after due time, produce his own riposte. And so on, for goodness knows how long.

The problem of this tactic is that the Government will certainly abolish hereditary peers in the next session anyway. The Labour manifesto was carefully worded to ensure it had a mandate to make that change, irrespective of any further move to an elected chamber.

The Salisbury doctrine of limited Lords power - formulated by Lord Cranborne's own ancestors - therefore prevents

the overwhelming desirability of making reform democratic. But they cannot wait for ever, if a bill is to be ready for the next session. They would need, moreover, a bankable assurance, perhaps from Hague himself that the Tories were serious about also wanting real reform.

The risks for Hague of adopting the reformist option are much less than they were in 1867 for Disraeli, who inevitably increased the numbers of Liberal as well as Tory voters by his reform. As for the

dangers of a split, the most dangerous opponents appear to be the Tory hereditary peers.

Yet, a public punch-up with his own hereditary peers could be just what Hague needs to sharpen his profile and show that he is the kind of modern, unreactionary leader he was projecting himself as last weekend. There are dangers for Hague in not acting. The Government will be able to stick some of the blame on the Tories if change stops at an appointed Upper Chamber. The Tories may seem remarkably unimportant today; but if they went for full reform, they would be able to influence events and to do so permanently.

Finally, as a matter of principle it happens to be right. The idea that it is reasonable in a late-20th-century democracy to replace a hereditary-dominated Lords with a bunch of assorted celebs, party hacks and self-serving corporate donors, who can't find the time or energy to face an electorate, cannot be sustained.

THE INDEPENDENT

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Ferdinand Porsche

THERE'S something eerily precise about the passing away of Ferdinand Porsche. For it is exactly 50 years since the first sports car bearing his name rolled into life in a remote former cove in Gmund, in Carinthia, Austria. And his death comes just days before a major retrospective of some 30 Porsche vehicles opens at the Design Museum in London.

Actually, "ratte" isn't a word associated with today's sleek and purring Porsche supercars, which start in Britain at £34,000. Back then, however, the hand-made Porsche 356 - its name derived from its design project number - shared its brazen exhaust note with the air-cooled Volkswagen Beetle on which the little sports car, looking for all the world like an upturned tin bath, was closely based. But there was method in its design madness: its extremely low lines and aerodynamic shape gave it a performance that belied its diminutive size.

In the five decades since, "Ferry" Porsche nurtured his organisation's extraordinary growth with the fatherly care of a Kew Gardens nurseryman, so that it is now, perhaps, the finest "marque" in the world. In 1948 Porsche thought it could sell 50 sports cars a year. In July 1996 the millionth Porsche streaked off the production line.

Ferry Porsche's photograph - usually showing him in a checked jacket - and signature appeared on the frontpiece of Porsche brochures for 30 years, yet he allegedly lived a modest lifestyle: in stark contrast to his customers. His secret lay in constantly and painstakingly refining the firm's core design of an air-cooled, rear-engined sports car. This meant that racing versions of the company's cars were so reliable they came

to dominate long-distance endurance races like the Le Mans 24 hours. Porsche has won the event more times than any other make. In 1983, taking the first eight places. In 1986 a Porsche 959 was the first sports car to win the gruelling Paris Dakar rally. It was just one of some 22,000 race victories for the cars.

Their road cars are as consistently dependable and solid as any German family saloon, yet possess the charisma that makes enthusiastic drivers bristle with excitement. It is a compromise that rivals from Lotus to Ferrari still struggle to emulate, and it has made Porsche a byword for sports-car excellence. They are not the easiest cars to drive, the weight bias at the rear often catching out the novice. To master a classic rear-engined Porsche, however, is to pass a sort of initiation ceremony.

The company could make other cars. Its front-engined, V8-powered 928 is still the only sports car ever to have scooped the Car of the Year award, in 1978. Recently, however, the firm has returned to its roots with the rear-engined Boxster, and its sales are rocketing.

Ferry Porsche was born in 1909. His father, also Ferdinand Porsche, was one of Europe's leading automotive engineers. He had created a novel electric car in 1900, the Lohner-Porsche, with electric hubs driving the front wheels, an early example of his extraordinary lateral thinking and obsession with precision, and was appointed chief engineer at Austro-Daimler in 1906, and at Mercedes-Benz in 1923.

It was here that Ferdinand senior perfected the supercharged engine that made the Mercedes-Benz SSK a formidable Le Mans contender; the technology later transferred neatly to Messerschmitt



Porsche: his cars possess a charisma that makes enthusiastic drivers bristle with excitement

Photograph: AFP

bombers in readiness for the Second World War.

For Herr Porsche was a Nazi party member. After setting up his own design consultancy in Stuttgart in 1931, his services were called upon to uphold German honour on the race track, and the Porsche-designed 16-cylinder Auto Union C-type grand prix cars went on to decimate rivals in international events throughout the 1930s.

Young Ferry drove his first car aged 10, and soon joined his father's business. Together, they worked on a series of prototypes which led to the birth of another Hitler dreamchild: initially called the Kraft Durch Freude, meaning "strength through joy", it ended up as plain Volks Wagen - "people's car".

Although the Second World War got in the way, the Volks

Wagen eventually started production under the auspices of British troops, in 1945. Just 1,785 were made that year, and it was scorned by a British motor industry commission. As the Volkswagen Beetle, however, it became the best-selling car of all time.

The Porsche clan returned to Austria in 1944, and set up shop with plans to design tractors. Early 356 production was farmed out to local contractors but by 1950 Porsche had returned to Stuttgart. The German-built 356, largely inspired by Ferry Porsche's desire to create a cheap fun car, began to win hearts and races, and in 1951, the year the old man died, Porsche had the temerity to show a car at the Earl's Court motor show in London.

But people knew a good thing when they saw it, and 77,361 356s were sold by 1965. By then, the new Porsche 911 had been launched, designed by Ferdinand Alexander Porsche, one of Ferry's four sons. A much-modified 911 is still on sale today.

In 1965 Ferry Porsche gained an honorary doctorate in engineering from the Technical University of Vienna. He took the family firm public in 1972, opening a large new research centre at Weissach the same year. In 1990 he became honorary chairman, a post he held until his death.

Throughout the boom-and-bust era of the 1980s, he steered the company, doggedly resisting mergers, and indeed hiring out his company's design expertise to rivals like Audi and Mercedes. When times were good,

he found ways to expand: the cheaper Porsche 924, for instance, used an engine from a VW van, and when Boxster demand began to outstrip supply, Ferry found a factory in Finland to make extra ones - to the consternation of his German workforce.

Ferry Porsche always retained his links with Austria, spending his final days at a holiday home in the mountains that he had bought in the 1930s. His nephew Ferdinand Piech today heads Volkswagen-Audi.

Giles Chapman

Ferdinand Anton Ernst Porsche, engineer and businessman: born Wiener Neustadt, Austria 19 September 1909; married 1935 Dorothea Reitz (died 1993; four sons); died Zell am See, Austria 27 March 1998.

Elias Freij

ELIAS FREIJ, the veteran mayor of Bethlehem, served his home town under British, Jordanian, Israeli and Palestinian rule. He became the standard-bearer of Palestinian moderation and an advocate of Palestinian-Israeli understanding and coexistence at a time of great hostility between the two sides.

Freij's 25 years at the helm of Bethlehem municipality were enough to test the patience of a saint, trying to operate under constant Israeli pressure and harassment. The short, rotund Freij was also a tireless advocate for his town, travelling the world to keep its problems before the international community and to remind Bethlehem exiles as far away as the United States and South America to retain close links with home.

Once a year, at Christmas, the world focused on Bethlehem as thousands of pilgrims converged on the Church of the Nativity in Manger Square. Freij always tried to use the occasion to boost the town's profile. During the intifada that erupted in December 1987, he was forced to cancel the traditional Christmas reception. As a Greek Orthodox Christian, Freij expressed concern about the dwindling Christian population of the town of 50,000, where Muslims now outnumber Christians two to one. Accelerating emigration has reduced the Christians in the West Bank to just 3 per cent of Palestinians, though last year Yasser Arafat decreed that Bethlehem will always have a Christian mayor.

Born in Bethlehem in 1918 in a family that traced its presence there back 500 years, Freij graduated from the British-run Bishop Gobat School in Jerusalem in 1940. In the early 1950s he headed the local branch of the Holy Land Mission, an American Presbyterian-backed charity. He owned a string of shops that sold olive-wood and mother-of-pearl souvenirs, and joined the Chamber of Commerce in 1946 during the British Mandate in Palestine. He was appointed to the town's municipal council under Jordanian rule in 1960 and remained when Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 war.

He became mayor in 1972 and was re-elected in 1976. Israel banned further municipal elections in the West Bank and Freij remained in office until resigning on health grounds last May. He was the only elected Palestinian mayor who was not eventually deposed by the Israeli military authorities for pro-Palestine Liberation Organisation leanings (perhaps because he was seen as leaning more to the Jordanians). Freij was also the only non-PLO mayor to remain in office after the Palestinian Authority took office. He was one of the few Pales-

tinian politicians who was prepared to meet Israeli politicians, meeting both Labour and Likud leaders. This did not always help his relations with the PLO. Although publicly stating his view during the occupation that only the PLO could represent the Palestinians, he was in private sometimes highly critical of it. When he counselled opening peace talks with Israel during the intifada, Arafat in Tunis threatened a "bullet in the chest" to anyone who undermined the exclusive authority of the PLO, a threat which was widely assumed to have been directed at Freij. The mayor also suffered abuse and death threats from radical Palestinians. In 1991 militants smashed his car after he defied a call for a Christmas Eve strike to protest at Israeli occupation. Relations with the PLO were smoothed over and Freij was chosen to be a member of the Palestinian negotiating team to the Madrid peace conference in 1991. When Arafat set up an autonomous Palestinian government in 1994, Freij became the first minister of tourism. In 1995, he presided over the first Christmas in Bethlehem under Palestinian rule, days after Israeli troops pulled out.

Freij was a constant opponent of violence. "Both sides will suffer, and the Arabs will suffer more," his vision of peace was the Bencul model, envisioning cooperation between Israel, Jordan and the Pales-



Freij: vision of peace

tinians. "In 1972 I said we must challenge Israel with peace and not war and there will be no solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict until we take the road to peace. These things were not accepted at the time," he recalled recently.

Freij died the day before the Palestinians commemorate Israel's land expropriation with Land Day. From his Bethlehem home, Freij had a clear view of the Gilo Jewish settlement, built above the Palestinian village of Beit Jala on expropriated land.

Felix Corley

Elias Freij, politician: born Bethlehem, Palestine 1918; Mayor of Bethlehem 1972-97; Minister of Tourism, Palestine 1994-97; married (six children); died Amman, Jordan 29 March 1998.

Jim Poole

JIM POOLE was the only male in the fourth generation of a show-business family which created a highly successful travelling attraction, a precursor of the cinema, called the Myriorama. Poole made his own mark by establishing the Cameo cinema as a notable outlet for top quality foreign films in his home town of Edinburgh.

Back in 1948, the Cameo was the King's, which Poole recalled in a 1996 interview as "a third-run cinema in a very decrepit state, but, if you got past

the grime and the rather peculiar green and yellow decoration, the Victorian architecture of the building was pretty good". Poole had to patch a leaking roof and dispatch the rat population before re-launching it as the Cameo in 1949 against his father's advice.

He was inspired not only by the success of the specialised programming at the Cosmo in Glasgow but by the low rates for which continental films could then be hired. He had huge successes with Jacques Tati's comedies among others and in 1978, when the big circuits spurned *Annie Hall*, played the Woody

Allen comedy for a grand total of 16 weeks. He also served on the council of the Edinburgh Film Festival, which used the Cameo for screenings.

By the time Jim Poole was born, the Myriorama had been largely replaced by moving pictures. But it lasted until the talkies came in 1928 - in its final years being revived as a Christmas treat. Poole described it as "a series of large moving canvases and tableaux". Tall rolls of panoramic paintings were slowly extended across the full width of the stage while a lecturer explained the significance of each view to the ac-

companied of sound effects. Wars and disasters were highly popular subjects. "The *Loss of the Titanic* held the box-office take - it was the greatest success in our Myriorama history," declared Poole. Paintings showed the departure from Liverpool, the view off the Needles lighthouse, the crash into the iceberg, the rockets, the lifeboats, and the rescue of survivors.

Educated at Durham, Poole was trained in every aspect of the cinema business before, at the age of 21, being put in charge of his father's newly built Regent in Aberdeen which he put on the map with some

lively publicity stunts. It was sold to Odeon and renamed, but he returned as guest of honour at the 50th anniversary in 1982.

The Poole circuit included the sleek new Roxy in the Edinburgh suburb of Gorgie, which opened in 1937 and succumbed to bingo in 1963, plus the Hippodrome, Gloucester, King's Hall, Stourbridge, and Coliseum, Cheltenham. Poole's also retained the cavernous Synod Hall on Edinburgh's Castle Terrace which housed the circuit headquarters in its room 18.

In contrast to the Cameo, the Synod Hall specialised in X-certificate horror double bills and

was still highly profitable when in 1965 the City Council forced its closure and rapid demolition for a new opera house - the site remained vacant for years.

The Cameo was the last of the Poole cinemas, closed when he retired in September 1982, but subsequently re-opened under new management and beautifully restored, still showing specialised films with two new mini-cinemas attached.

Allen Eyles

John Kennedy Stafford Poole, film exhibitor: born 7 July 1911; married 1936 his Stork (three daughters); died 16 January 1998.



O'Brien: no soft options

Kate Cruise O'Brien

KATE CRUISE O'BRIEN emerged on to the lively Irish writing scene of the Seventies with an immediate impact, winning the Hennessy Literary Award in 1971 when just 22 with one of her first short stories.

After studying English at Trinity College Dublin, where she also took a diploma in education, she soon married. She initially planned a career in

teaching but instead opened a crèche for children of working mothers while bringing up her son Alexander.

Her first book, *Gift Horse*, published in 1979, also won an award and she followed this in the early 1980s by branching out into newspaper work with a column in the *Irish Independent*.

A second career opened in book publishing when several

years later she joined Poolbeg, one of a clutch of small but prolific Irish literary houses. Working alongside the enthusiastic publisher Phil MacDermott, she became editorial director and won wide respect through her discerning eye for emerging new writers.

MacDermott was full of praise for the contribution of his new lieutenant, whose contri-

bution effectively resurrected a company that by his own admission had wandered after its major 1983 success with *The Boss*, Joe Joyce and Peter Murtagh's classic warts-and-all biography of Charles Haughey.

Joyce observed with admiration how O'Brien "was able to come up with a clutch of blockbusters as if from nowhere". Several were sold on for wider paper-

back distribution through British and international publishers.

Among her finds was Marian Keyes, best-selling author of *Water Melons* and *Lucy Sullivan is Getting Married*. She praised O'Brien's unwillingness to allow her any "soft options" in her story-telling. Charting in one word the painful experience of recovery from addiction, Keyes recalled in the *Irish Times*, "I

begged to be absolved from it, but Kate was quite matter of fact. 'You've got to write the book that wants to be written,' she kept saying."

MacDermott described O'Brien as "irreplaceable, a unique and wonderful talent". She was the daughter of the formidable and controversial diplomat, journalist and author Conor Cruise O'Brien,

one-time editor-in-chief of the *Observer* and recently adviser to the small UK Unionist Party in Northern Ireland. Her mother is the Derry-born Christine Foster.

Alan Murdoch

Kate Cruise O'Brien, writer and publisher: born Dublin 1948; married 1971 Joseph Kearney (one son); died Dublin 26 March 1998.

DEATHS

DUNLOP: On 28 March, at St Theresa's Nursing Home, Eastingstone, peacefully, after a long illness, Peter Angus Dunlop, 82, husband of Vera, 79, and loving father of Louise and Hattie, proud Papa to Freddy and Tom. Co-founder of Fraser and Dunlop. Family flowers only but donations, if desired, to C&S (raising for the homeless) c/o Camp Hospice, Funeral Directors, 90 West Street, Newbury RG14 1HA. Funeral Monday 6 April at 2.30pm at Douai Abbey, Woodhampton.

FISHER: Bridget Maureen (Biddy), nee Acheson, wife of the late Canon John H.W. Fisher, of Berkeley and Rockhampton, on Friday 27 March 1998. Private cremation. Thanksgiving Service, followed by interment of ashes, at 3pm on Friday 3 April at St Oswald's Church, Rockhampton. No flowers in Lent, but donations may be made in aid of Berkeley and Rockhampton Churches, c/o Grimes & Goscombe Funeral Services, Chipping Monitor, The Chipping, Woodton-under-Edge GL12 7AD.

HICKS: David Nightingale, died Sunday afternoon, 29 March 1998, in his 70th year, after a peacefully short fight against cancer, peacefully, at home in bed looking out over his beloved garden, surrounded by his adoring family. Funeral this Saturday, 4 April, 11.30am, at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Eveline, Oxfordshire. Memorial Service in London to follow in early summer.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS
Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh's eldest son, the "Windsor" 7, dined at the Royal Carlton Hotel, London SW1. The Duke of Kent, President of the Automobile Association, attended the funeral of the Chairman's Committee about the Port of London Authority Launch Royal New, London E13.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

MAYNARD: Joan, born 5 July 1921, died 27 March 1998, aged 76. Funeral St Oswald's Church, Sowerby, Thirsk, 3pm, Friday 3 April. Flowers c/o Rusecroft, 23 Cundall Avenue, Asenby, North Yorkshire, or donations to Greenpeace.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

HINSLEY: A Memorial Service for Professor Sir Harry Hinsley OBE MA FBA, Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, and sometime Master, Emeritus Professor of the History of International Relations and sometime Vice-Chancellor, will be held in St John's College Chapel on Saturday 2 May 1998 at 12 noon. Application forms for tickets may be obtained from the Chapel Clerk, St John's College, Cambridge CB2 1TP.

Announcements for BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (births, marriages, deaths, memorial services, wedding anniversaries, in Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-253 2812 or faxed to 0171-253 2810, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Princess Alexandra, President of the Friends of the V&A, attends a reception for the British Galleries Appeal at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London SW7.

Changing of the Guard
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment marches the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Birthdays

Mr Herb Alpert, musician, 62; Professor Patrick Bateson, Provost, King's College, Cambridge, 60; Mr Richard Coltrane, actor, 63; Mr Alan Duncan MP, 41; Air Marshal Sir Herbert Durkin, 76; Mr Don Foster MP, 51; Mr John Fowles, novelist, 72; Mr David Heneker, composer and lyricist, 92; Mr John Kemp-Welch, chairman of the Stock Exchange, 62; Sir Pat Lowry, former president, Institute of Personnel Management, 78; Sir Derek Pattinson, former secretary-general, General Synod of the Church of England, 68; Air Commodore Helen Renton, former Director, WRAF, 67; The Right Rev Dom John Roberts, former Abbot of Downside, 79; Mr Bob Russell MP, 52; Professor Dame Sheila Sherlock, Professor of Medicine, Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, 80; Lord Steel of Aikwood, former MP, 60; Professor Sir Frederick Warner, chemical engineer, 88; Mr Sidney Weighell, former trade union leader, 76; Mr Nicholas Winterton MP, 60.

Anniversaries

Births: René Descartes, philosopher, 1596; Andrew Marvell, poet, pamphleteer and politician, 1621. Deaths: John Donne, poet, 1631; John Constable, painter, 1837; Charlotte Brontë, novelist, 1855. On this day the Eiffel Tower was inaugurated in Paris, 1889; Whitcomb Judson, inventor, patented the zip fastener, 1896. Today is the Feast Day of St Acacius or Acathus, St Balbina, St Benjamin and St Guy of Pomposia.

LAW REPORT: 31 MARCH 1998

Use of words 'farm fluid' in name was passing off

Antec International Ltd v South Western Chicks (Warren) Ltd; Chancery Division (Michael Hart QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the Chancery Division) 27 March 1998

THE WORDS "farm fluid" in the name of an agricultural disinfectant were not merely descriptive but were capable of being appropriated as a trade name, and their use in the name of a rival product, accordingly, amounted to passing off.

The plaintiff, Antec International Ltd, succeeded in an action for passing off against the defendant, South Western Chicks (Warren) Ltd.

The plaintiff had for many years manufactured and sold an agricultural disinfectant using the brand name "Antec Farm Fluid S". At the 1996 Stoneleigh agricultural show the defendant had advertised a competing

agricultural disinfectant under the name "Super Farm Fluid", and was subsequently found to be marketing the product as "SWC Super Farm Fluid". The plaintiff brought an action for passing off, and obtained an interlocutory injunction.

Richard Hacon (instructed by Lupton Forester) for the plaintiff; Denise McFarland (instructed by Baker & Dukes, Minster) for the defendant.

Michael Hart QC said that the parties were at issue on each of the elements of the "classical triad" of the tort of passing off, namely, whether the plaintiff had acquired goodwill in the name "Farm Fluid", the defendant contending that the term by itself was so generally descriptive that it had not acquired any secondary connotation in which goodwill could subsist; whether there had been any misrepresentation

leading to confusion, or whether the addition of the prefixes "SWC" and "Super" to the defendant's product sufficed to dispel any potential confusion; and whether more than minimal damage had been or would be likely to be caused to the plaintiff's goodwill.

There was no controversy about the basic facts. The plaintiff made and sold, *inter alia*, disinfectants for use on farms. It was the market leader in England in that field. The name "Farm Fluid" had first been used as a name by Jeyes plc in 1976 the plaintiff had acquired from Jeyes plc the business of Jeyes Animal Health Division, which had included the making and selling of "Jeyes Farm Fluid". The plaintiff had continued to make and sell that product, but from 1979 onward had marketed and sold it as "Antec Farm Flu-

id", and from 1985 as "Antec Farm Fluid S".

The unchallenged evidence of the plaintiff established conclusively that the words "Farm Fluid" had come to be associated in the minds of the relevant section of the public (i.e. farmers) with the Antec product, but the defendant contended that the words were so generally descriptive that they could not serve, or be taken in law as serving, to distinguish the Antec product in the minds of the relevant section of the public from other similar products.

The courts would be very slow to intervene to protect a trade name which was simply descriptive. Whilst it was true that the words "farm" and "fluid" were common English words, the words "farm fluid" in conjunction, however, were not. In order to demonstrate that they were simply descrip-

tive of the plaintiff's product, evidence of a general usage amongst farmers of the term "farm fluid" to describe agricultural disinfectants sold in liquid form would have been required, and there was no such evidence in the instant case.

The plaintiff had, on the evidence of witnesses in the trade, established that the marketing and sale of a product named "SWC Super Farm Fluid" would be likely to lead a substantial proportion of farmers to believe that there was some trade connection between that product and that of the plaintiff.

It followed almost inevitably that there was a likelihood that the plaintiff would suffer damage which was more than minimal if the defendant was permitted to use the words "Farm Fluid" in the description of its product.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

John's in 1950

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FINANCIAL JOURNAL OF THE YEAR

Chinese premier's visit awakens bitter memories

By Terry Macalister

THE CHINESE PREMIER, Zhu Rongji, arrives in London today with British business leaders lobbying furiously to win access to the most populous market in the world.

Royal & Sun Alliance hopes to become the first UK insurer to gain approval to operate in China, while British Airways yesterday announced new plans for expansion in the region.

But not everyone thinks China is the land of opportunity. It

is also one of danger, according to Richard Gosling, a London-based entrepreneur. He invested millions of pounds only to find himself cheated out of money and legal judgements ignored.

He told *The Independent* yesterday: "When I first became involved I thought I was dealing with a normal commercial environment. By the end it was like a James Bond movie with car chases and people following me on foot round London."

That was not his view 10 years ago. Then Mr Gosling's

Zonehealth Associates was looking for a low-cost facility to produce printed circuit boards for a new generation of car alarms.

Mr Gosling had potential contracts for equipment from Selmar Alarms when he was introduced to Zhai Zhi Ming, a representative from China Tianjin International Economic and Technical Co-operative Corp (CTIETCC).

This Chinese company is the 14th-largest state-owned corporation in China and its senior management were all government officials. It had London of-

fices in the commercial office of the Chinese embassy.

Mr Gosling was invited to Tianjin where he was lured by the local major. Zonehealth signed a joint venture agreement with CTIETCC and immediately invested £250,000 to help re-equip one of CTIETCC's factories for producing circuit boards.

Zonehealth also entered into a second deal to produce footpumps for cars.

But time passed and no circuit boards materialised. A consignment of footpumps arrived four months after they were sup-

posed to. Their quality made them unsaleable.

Alarmed at the lack of progress, Mr Gosling told CTIETCC he wanted to come over to Tianjin and discuss the issue, but was told such a visit was inappropriate. After further stalling Mr Gosling realised he had been "shaded". He asked the British Foreign Office for help and was told by Richard Needham, the then trade minister, that he would raise the issue on a forthcoming visit. He didn't.

In exasperation Mr Gosling started High Court proceedings

against the Chinese for breach of contract. In January 1992 he won his case and by September had compensation, costs with interest awarded in his favour.

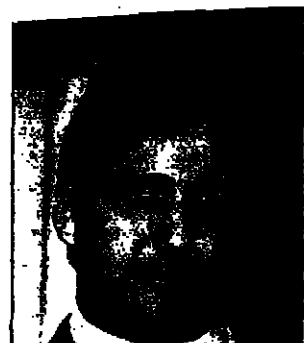
But the judgment was ignored and Mr Gosling found himself being forced to hire lawyers in the UK and far East in a bid to seize CTIETCC's assets.

Gosling visited Beijing for further talks with CTIETCC. He was warned by the British embassy there not to leave his hotel alone. Mr Gosling returned to London with only promises. The picture only began to

change when Wilde Sapte, the law firm, obtained a winding up order against CTIETCC assets in Hong Kong. CTIETCC officials told Mr Gosling they were prepared to pay up.

By September 1995, Mr Gosling had obtained enough compensation to cover the costs of hiring lawyers. But his struggle has left him feeling outraged.

He said last night: "CTIETCC officials were not governed by any legal, moral or commercial considerations. They were above the law and this has not changed."



Richard Gosling: "It was like a James Bond movie"

BMW pledges £350m new cash for Rolls

By Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

ROLLS-ROYCE, the luxury carmaker that has been a symbol of British prestige for nearly a century, passed into German hands yesterday.

BMW, which already owns Rover, is buying Rolls for £340m - more than double the book value ascribed to it by its present owners, Vickers. The actual cost of the deal is likely to creep upwards as Vickers expects capital investment since January to be paid for by BMW.

The German car giant promised to double the 2,600-strong workforce at Crewe, invest more than £350m and triple worldwide annual sales of Rolls and Bentleys to 6,000.

It is taking over a company whose models have been used by the rich and famous throughout the 20th century. Rolls-Royce said it was sad the company was moving out of British ownership but staff agreed that the BMW takeover was good news for the company's future.

BMW was already making engines for Rolls-Royce and was favourite to win the battle for the company once Vickers announced last autumn that it was up for sale.

Other contenders had included Germany's Volkswagen and two private consortia, including a group of Rolls-Royce owners. VW is still committed to establishing a luxury car brand and is reportedly looking at resurrecting the premier "Horch" marque.

Mercedes will also be keeping a close eye on BMW's move. It is planning to launch a luxury limousine in competition with Rolls-Royce.

Vickers insisted it had got a good price for the company and had found Rolls-Royce "a good home". However, a group of enthusiasts who also bid for the company warned they would fight the proposed take-over.

The Rolls Royce Acquisition Consortium said: "We bid more than £300m. We will top it up to BMW's bid... we will encourage shareholders to vote against the current bid."

BMW is unlikely to lose any sleep over that.

Berni Fischetsrieder, BMW's chairman, outlined his company's likely plans for Rolls-Royce at the Geneva Motor Show earlier this month.

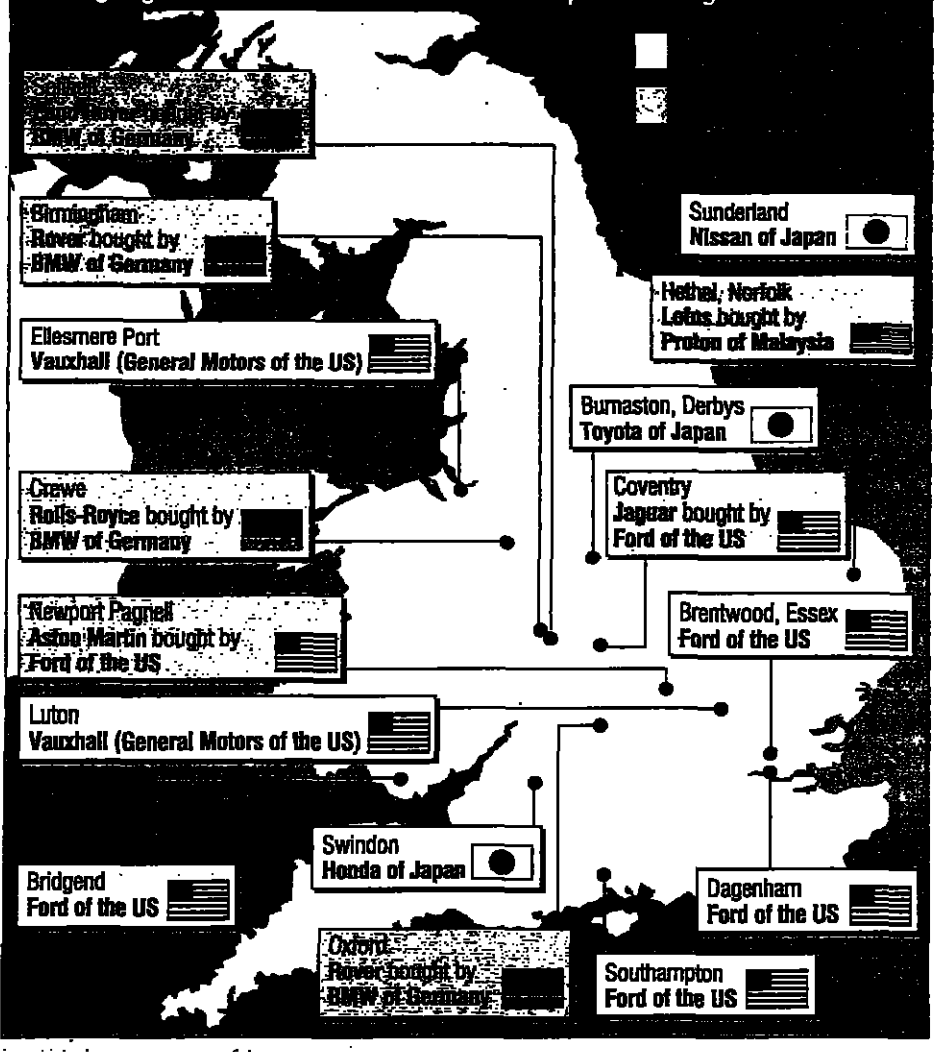
This included pumping in £1bn of investment in two new model lines over 10 years. Motor industry experts say the first of the new cars to emerge could be a baby Bentley based on the prototype "Java", showcased in 1994 and priced at £100,000. A BMW 5 series chassis was used in the design of the Java.

As well as producing the new Silver Seraph, the Crewe workforce currently makes the two-door Bentley Continental, R and Azure models. Worldwide Rolls-Royce sales last year reached 1,918 - 10 per cent up on the 1996 figure.

Graham Morris, chief executive of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, said: "We are delighted with the news and can now look forward to the future with even greater confidence."

He added: "We know BMW very well and en-

Changing direction: UK car ownership in foreign hands



joy an excellent working relationship with them. This outcome provides the most positive commitment to the future of Rolls-Royce and Bentley in Crewe and to the security of employment of our 2,600 loyal employees."

Steve Taylor, works convenor for the Amalgamated Engineering Union which has 1,000 members at Crewe, said: "We needed long-term investment and it looks like we've got it. People

have greeted the news well this morning and are brushing up on their German."

The sale of Rolls-Royce to a foreign enterprise follows a well established pattern. It follows Ford's acquisition of Aston Martin and Jaguar, BMW's purchase of Rover, and the purchase of Lotus by Proton of Malaysia. Only specially carmakers such as sports-car maker TVR Engineering remain in British hands.

Bacardi wins Dewar's in £1.15bn deal

By Andrew Yates

BACARDI-MARTINI, the Bermuda-based spirits giant, has pulled off one of the biggest deals the drinks industry has ever seen. The world's biggest rum maker has agreed to pay £1.15bn in cash for Dewar's, America's best selling whisky, and Bombay gin, the fastest growing spirits brand.

Bacardi beat off more than 20 rivals to win an auction for the two brands and the final price smashed City forecasts. Diageo stands to make a profit of £460m on the deal.

Dewar's and Bombay made profits of £95m last year, after a combined marketing spend of around £70m. The deal satisfies Bacardi's craving for a leading whisky brand to go alongside its white rum, which is the biggest selling brand in the world, and furthers its ambition to become a major force in the drinks industry. It also gives the group the chance to develop Bombay Sapphire, one of the most exciting of the new spirit brands, around the world.

About £500m of the sale proceeds have already been earmarked to help pay the

£2.9bn special dividend Diageo announced last year. The rest of the money will go to pay off some of the group's debts. However analysts believe that the bumper sales price is likely to lead to bringing forward plans to make further returns to shareholders via a share buy back or another special dividend.

Diageo was formed last December when Guinness and Grand Metropolitan merged to create the largest drinks combine in the world. It was forced to sell the brands by June to get the green light for the blockbuster deal from the US and European and competition authorities. Bacardi's acquisition will safeguard the future of Dewar's four distilleries in Scotland.

The acquisition of Dewar's is a big strategic move for Bacardi, which had annual sales of \$2.7bn (£1.6bn) and made pre-tax profits of \$234m in the 64 weeks to March 1997. George B. Reid Jr, Bacardi's president and chief executive, said: "In an industry that is consolidating rapidly to a few, very powerful players, it became clear to us that Bacardi had a unique opportunity to acquire two world-class brands."

Outlook, page 21

Decaux trumps More Group bid

By Kerry Benefield

DECAUX, the advertising giant, made good on its challenge for rival More Group yesterday, offering a bid which trumped the £466m put forward by US media conglomerate Clear Channel Communications earlier this month.

More Group withdrew its recommendation of the Clear Channel sale yesterday, advising shareholders to take no action. "We want to maximise shareholder value, but we also want to maximise certainty and deliverability," a spokesman said yesterday, adding: "We need clarification on the regulatory issues."

The offer by New Decaux, a wholly owned subsidiary of Decaux of France, yesterday valued More Group at £475m and offered a payout of £110p per share. The offer represents a premium of 8 per cent to the Clear Channel offer, and a

35 per cent premium to the closing price of the More Group the day before Clear Channel's March 4 bid.

"The combination of More Group with Decaux will generate considerable strategic and commercial benefits for both businesses by bringing together Decaux's strong presence in continental European markets and More Group's strong position in the UK and Scandinavia," Decaux said in a statement yesterday.

A spokesman for Decaux said the company had consulted with a legal team about the offer and does not expect its bid to be sidelined by any British regulatory issues. "In relation to the UK bid, there is no UK problem."

The combination of More and Decaux would have an 88 per cent share of the UK market for advertising on street furniture, but only about 24 per cent of the overall outdoor advertising market.

Mattel thwarts hostile bid for Bluebird Toys

By Kerry Benefield

MATTEL, the US toy giant, yesterday launched a £46m agreed bid for Bluebird Toys, in effect thwarting the hostile £42m takeover offer initiated by Guinness Peat Group in January.

The offer by Mattel, the maker of Barbie dolls, came more than a month after Bluebird rejected a bid of 101p-a-share from GPG. The latest offer values Bluebird at 111p-a-share, which Bluebird said it accepted "in the absence of any higher offer."

A spokesman for Mattel said it would be "very surprising" if another offer were put on the table. "The market thinks this is it."

Bluebird, the maker of Polly Pocket and The Tiny Disney Collection, has been under fire for drastic profit losses in recent years. The market responded to the announcement by dropping

Bluebird's share price 3p to 111.5p. Mattel's offer represents a 30p per cent premium over Bluebird's closing share price of 85p a share on 16 January, the day before GPG's initial offer.

The deal was unveiled as Mattel announced it was exercising its rights to manufacture Polly Pocket in North America, which Chris Burgin, Bluebird's chief executive, said would lead to the "consequential reduction in profits to Bluebird from this vitally important product."

Later, Guinness Peat said this statement showed the deal was "onerous and prejudicial" to Bluebird. Blake Nixon, an executive director, said: "It is extraordinary that an offer only sees fit on the 45th day of an offer period finally to inform shareholders of the existence of such prejudicial arrangements."

Bluebird's North American sales in 1996 were £15.7m, but fell to £5.8m in 1997. Polly Pocket is a key product in Blue-

bird's arsenal, yet the North American market failed to respond to the toy.

A 1999 relaunch of Polly Pocket has been planned, a move which Jill Barad, the chairman of Mattel, said would be shored up with the company's backing. "The offer reflects Mattel's confidence in the Polly Pocket and The Disney Tiny Collection brands. Our acquisition... will ensure that Mattel is well-positioned to grow these brands to their full potential."

Mr Burgin said the acquisition would reduce shareholder risk. "A great deal of the potential value in Bluebird depends upon the successful relaunch of Polly Pocket and The Tiny Disney Collection in North America which necessarily carries with it not inconsiderable risk," he said. "This offer from Mattel removes any risk or uncertainty for our shareholders as to the future outcome of these relaunches."

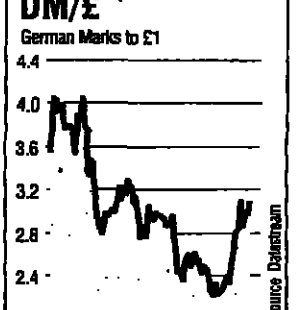
Export plea for rates freeze as pound hits 10-year high

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

THE POUND soared yesterday to its highest level against the German mark this decade. Sterling fever on the foreign exchanges led to fresh pleas from industry to the Bank of England not to raise interest rates when its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meets next week.

The pound jumped from just under DM3.08 to a whisker below DM3.10, the highest since August 1989. Its index against a range of currencies rose 0.5 to 108.7. The sterling index has gained 4 per cent since the start of this year and nearly 2 per cent since the Budget.

Analysts predicted the pound would stay strong for the foreseeable future. Gerard Lyons at DKB said: "The British economy is in better shape than the Continental economies, and the pound can stay stronger for longer. We're just going to have to put up with it."



Business organisations were pessimistic about the prospect of any respite from the exchange rate squeeze, which companies complain is pricing UK goods out of export markets.

Alan Armitage, economic adviser at the Engineering Employers' Federation, said: "The pain is there, but it is hard to see what policy measures could be taken."

Kate Barker of the Confederation of British Industry said: "If the pound stays at this kind

of level for the rest of the year, you can expect to see exporters starting to pull out of markets and multinationals starting to shift their production elsewhere."

Figures hinting at a slowdown in consumer spending at home, which might help the doves on the MPC win their argument again this month, had no impact on the markets.

The increase in consumer credit in February was £1.1bn, down from a record £1.3bn in January. The Bank also reported a modest slowdown in the growth of M0, the narrow money measure consisting mainly of cash in circulation, fitting in with anecdotal reports of a slower pace of high street spending.

Separately, the Nationwide building society said house prices rose less rapidly in March, although they had now comfortably passed their 1989 peak. Prices rose by 0.8 per cent during the month to reach a level 12.3 per cent higher than a year earlier.

Yesterday in the markets

STOCK MARKETS

Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5911.90	-27.40	-0.46	6105.00	5100.10	3.44
FTSE 250	3520.30	-2.80	-0.08	3544.40	3284.20	3.05
FTSE 350	2674.30	-11.20	-0.42	2697.00	2075.70	3.37
FTSE All Share	2634.40	-3.50	-0.13	2657.90	2102.10	2.95
FTSE Smallcap	1413.40	-1.30	-0.09	1415.30	1225.20	3.22
FTSE AIM	1080.00	-1.30	-0.12	1085.70	905.90	1.06
Dow Jones	8797.07	3.20	0.04	8853.24	8334.78	1.36
Nikkei	16263.04	-478.22	-2.94	16818.73	14489.21	0.82
Hang Seng	11503.76	-291.74	-2.53	12681.51	7812.13	5.51
Wall St	5009.76	-13.40	-0.27	5100.19	4192.33	1.52

INTEREST RATES

Short sterling	UK 10 year gilt	US long bond
3 month 1 yr 5 yr	1 yr 5 yr 10 yr	1 yr 5 yr 10 yr
5.89 5.89 5.89	5.89 5.89 5.89	5.89 5.89 5.89
5.89 5.89 5.89	5.89 5.89 5.89	5.89 5.89 5.89
5.89 5.89 5.89	5.89 5.89 5.89	5.89 5.89 5.89
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5.89 5.89 5.89	5.89 5.89 5.89	5.89 5.89 5.89

CURRENCIES

\$/£	DM/£	¥/£
1.6788 -0.30p	1.8450 +1.86p	182.17 +22.04
1.6788 -0.30p	1.8450 +1.86p	182.17 +22.04
1.6788 -0.30p	1.8450 +1.86p	182.17 +22.04
1.6788 -0.30p	1.8450 +1.86p	182.17 +22.04
1.6788 -0.30p	1.8450 +1.86p	182.17 +22.04
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1.6788 -0.30p	1.8450 +1.86p	182.17 +22.04
1.6788 -0.30p	1.8450 +1.86p	182.17 +22.04
1.6788 -0.30p	1.8450 +1.86p	182.17 +22.04

TOURIST RATES

Australia (\$)	2.450	Malaysia (ringgit)	5.720
Austria (schillings)	20.99	Malta (lira)	0.642
Belgium (francs)	61.73	Netherlands (guilders)	3.362
Canada (\$)	2.320	New Zealand (\$)	2.909
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8579	Norway (kroner)	12.38
Denmark (kroner)	11.46	Portugal (escudos)	303.76
Finland (markka)	9.177	Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.134
France (francs)	10.02	Singapore (\$)	2.5546
Germany (marks)	3.0004	Spain (pesetas)	253.54
Greece (drachme)	514.63	South Africa (rand)	8.0965
Hong Kong (\$)	0.64	Sweden (kroner)	12.96
Ireland (pounds)	1.1877	Switzerland (francs)	2.4630
Israel (shekels)	5.5763	Thailand (baht)	57.77
Italy (lira)	2.963	Turkey (lira)	389.14
Japan (yen)	218.69	USA (\$)	1.6488

Sources: Thomas Cook
Rates for indication purposes only

Buy-back bonanza for three firms' investors

By Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

IT WAS a bumper day for shareholders yesterday as three companies announced substantial share buy-backs. WH Smith led the way with plans for a £250m capital return following the completion of the £300m sale of Waterstone's to HMV Media.

Burmah Castrol, the lubricants group, also showered its shareholders with £250m. Separately Ascot, the engineering mini conglomerate, announced a £50m share buy-back.

Shareholders in WH Smith will receive 53.75p per share, representing a return of 10 per cent of the company's market value, or £150m. The buy-back will be effected via the issue and buy-back of B shares. At the same time there will be a consolidation of the company's share capital on the basis of nine new ordinary shares for every 10 currently held. The remainder of the capital return will be conducted through market purchase of around £100m.

The size of Smith's cash return was in line with analysts' expectations and the City drew additional comfort from the company's comments that it would consider further buy-backs. These will depend on the outcome of negotiations with Virgin over the sale of Smith's 75 per cent stake in the Virgin-Our Price music group.

"We will sell to Virgin if they are prepared to pay us a sensible price for the business," said Richard Handover, Smith's chief executive. "But we're in no great rush to do it." Smith's has an option to buy the remainder of the business next year.

He said there were no plans for further corporate activity.

"We're just in the process of buying John Menzies and we have a lot of work to do on the existing business," Smith's shares edged up 5p to 542.5p.

Burmah Castrol plans to return not less than £250m of capital to shareholders although these plans are not expected to be executed until after April 1999. The company intends to seek shareholder approval at this year's annual general meeting to buy back up to 10 per cent of its share capital. Management will renew this power annually.

But the company is likely to wait until ACT is abolished in the spring of next year before moving ahead as this would be more tax efficient and "serve shareholders' best interests".

Tim Stevenson, the new chief executive, said the eventual figure could be higher than £250m. It is part of a strategy of balance sheet management under which the company will also redeem its small number of preference shares.

Burmah shares soared 69p to 1170p on the buyback plans plus better than expected pre-tax profits which were 7 per cent ahead at £279m.

Shares in Ascot Holdings, the engineering group run by Hamley's chairman Howard Dyer, climbed on news that the company is returning £50m to shareholders, worth around 61p per share. Ascot is seeking shareholder approval for the re-purchase of up to 10 per cent of its stock.

Mr Dyer said that trading results in the first two months of the year were ahead of 1997's and that substantial funds were being committed to organic growth. The shares rose 31.5p to 296.5p. Profits last year rose from £6m to £30m.

Milk float delivers a 25% share price gain for Express Dairies



Liquid assets: A milkman unloads his empties at the West Hampstead, London, depot of Express Dairies, which yesterday enjoyed a buoyant debut on the stock market following its demerger from Northern Foods. The

shares gained more than 25 per cent from their opening price of 142p to close 40p up at 182p. Northern Foods' shares closed 78p lower at 223.5p. Analysts said the increase in Express Dairies' shares was partly due to

takeover speculation. Express Dairies is the UK's largest supplier of liquid milk and has the largest share of the doorstep delivery market, which has been suffering steady decline. Photograph: Nicholas Turpin

Pentland defends £1m payoff to directors

By Nigel Cope

TWO DIRECTORS of Pentland, the Speedo and Ellesse sportswear group, received combined payoffs of almost £1m last year.

Frank Farrant, the finance director who quit in March, received £332,000 for loss of office and was paid a further £178,000 for three months of consultancy work. Patrick McGuigan, the chief operations director who resigned in May, received a bonus of £257,000.

The two directors also made substantial gains from the exercise of share options.

Pentland defended the payments, revealed in the company's latest annual report, saying they were part of the two directors' contractual entitlements. "They [the payments] were to the letter of the contracts and were made to people who had given good service to the company over a number of years."

Pentland received widespread criticism last year when the company appointed 33-year-old Andrew Rubin as chief executive. He is the son of Stephen Rubin, the chairman of Pentland and the majority shareholder.

The company insisted yesterday that it was acting in accordance with corporate governance guidelines. It said it had appointed a new non-executive director and that Clinton Silver, the former Marks & Spencer director, headed up the remuneration committee. "The company has taken a number of steps to comply with best practice," a spokesman said.

Stephen Rubin's total pay was unchanged last year at £344,233. However, because of his 53 per cent stake in the company, his dividend cheque last year was for £7.5m. Andrew Rubin was paid £232,000, up from £186,000 the previous year. His pay included a bonus of £75,000 plus other taxable benefits of £28,000. The increases took the total wage bill for directors to £2.5m for the year, an increase of 25 per cent.

ICI pays £560m for US speciality chemicals unit

By Terry Macalister

ICI yesterday stepped up its expansion into speciality chemicals with the £560m cash purchase of US-based Acheson Industries.

The move is the second big acquisition this year for ICI, which has just spent £350m buying Williams's European Home Improvement business. ICI, which makes Dulux paint and Polyfilla cement, will combine Acheson with National Starch and Chemical, a business it bought last year.

Acheson makes materials used in electronics for televisions, computers, medical systems and telephones. It had 1997 sales of \$1.89m (£112.5m)

and earnings of \$46m before interest and tax.

ICI now joins Laporte, Britain's fourth biggest chemical maker, in expanding its electronics industry supply business. This industry has generated consistently higher returns than ICI's mainstay commodity chemicals.

"It's a profitable industry with long-term massive growth still to come from electronics and computers," said Philip Morris, analyst with Nikko Securities in London.

ICI first made a significant move into speciality chemicals and materials last year with the \$8bn purchase of Unilever's divisions including Quest International and National Starch.

Government sells Mersey Docks stake for £70m

By Andrew Varty

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday sold its stake in the Mersey Docks and Harbour company for £70m in the first sell-off of state assets since Labour came to power.

The sale of the 14 per cent stake follows the resolution in January of a bitter, two-year dispute between 327 dockers and the company's management.

ABN Amro Rothschild, acting as adviser to the Treasury, said £70m was raised through the sale of 12.4 million shares at 565p each, which represented the mid-price on offers for the shares. The sale was oversubscribed, the company said.

The Mersey dockers were locked out in November 1995 after they went on strike in sympathy with staff at a local firm of stevedores. Since coming to power in May, the Government has resisted calls by union leaders to use its stake to intervene on behalf of dockers.

The dockers became a cause célèbre last year as football stars such as Liverpool's Robbie Fowler backed the locked-out workers. In January, Mersey Docks and Harbour spent more than £9m settling the dispute, offering the dockers a lump sum worth £28,000 each.

Trevor Furlong, the company's chief executive, said the dispute was now behind the company. He also pledged to boost an investment programme, spending £25m on a deep water berth and cold storage in Sheerness, Kent, and £10m on the Twelve Quays ferry terminal in Liverpool.

The company's profits climbed by 16.6 per cent to £34.6m last year - even after a £10m provision for settling the dispute. Cargo volumes rose at both of its ports, Liverpool and Medway.

The Government now stands to make £70m - compared to less than £60m last year. Shares in the company have risen from 490p to 573p within the last year, valuing the company at more than £1.5bn.

Mersey Docks shares closed up 3p at 576.5p.

the university for industry

Monday 20 April 1998

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Parliamentary Under Secretary, DfEE

Rosie Boycott,

Editor, The Independent and The Independent on Sunday

David Brown,

Chairman, Motorola Ltd and Chair, UFI Design and Implementation Advisory Group

Josh Hillman,

Institute for Public Policy Research

Simon Sperry,

Chief Executive, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry

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Chief Executive, Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals

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THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

Burmah keeps its foot down

THERE are many factors which have taken the price of the Burmah Castrol share price: a soaring pound, increasingly mature western markets and economic turmoil in the Far East. But the lubricants to chemicals group which powers (and sponsors) the highly successful Williams Formula One racing team still has its foot firmly down on the accelerator.

Yesterday it announced a higher than expected 7 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £279.7m for 1997 and its shares soared ahead 69p to 1170p. Investors stand to benefit further from a £250m share buyback, although for tax reasons this will not be executed until after April 1999.

Competitiveness is growing ever more intense in the mature North American and European markets. But innovative marketing, tight cost controls and supply chain efficiencies leave Burmah Castrol scope for growth.

The group is in the middle of a radical restructuring as its management aims back the company to concentrate on core businesses. The chemicals division is being repositioned with the disposal of the adhesives and metal carbonylates divisions. A 50 per cent stake in a liquid gas project and a 64 per cent holding in Pakistan Petroleum have been discarded while a small number of other peripheral activities, like fuels in Ireland and Belgium will eventually follow.

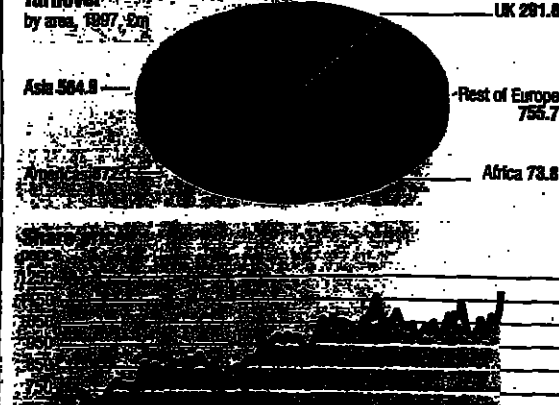
And although Burmah Castrol was hit by the economic turmoil in South-east Asia in the last quarter of 1997, it has escaped the worst of the region's problems. 1998 will see the company's Thai and Malay activities struggle a bit but the overall impact on group profits will be slight. New Burmah Castrol is planning a big push into China.

Burmah Castrol: At a glance

Market value: £2.2bn, share price 1170p (+69p)

Five-year record	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Turnover (£m)	27	29	29	30	29
Pre-tax profits (£m)	141.7	219.5	253.0	261.4	279.7
Earnings per share (p)	53.1	69.4	66.9	74.2	58.0
Dividends per share (p)	27.5	30.0	33.4	36.8	40.5

Turnover by area, 1997, £m



The strong pound knocked £42m off operating profits in 1997 and will continue to hit the company hard this year. Broker Robert Fleming predicts 1998 post-tax profits of £154m compared with £160.2m in 1997.

At constant currencies, pre-tax profits would have been up 23 per cent last year and underlying earnings should continue to grow strongly. Sitting on a forward multiple of 15 the shares remain good long-term value.

Premier price for Man Utd

MANCHESTER United have been struggling for form off the pitch as well as on it. The shares have fallen from a peak of 183p at the end of 1996 and the group has underperformed the market by 36 per cent over the last 12 months.

An early exit from the European Cup cost the group nearly £4m in lost ticket revenues. Poor league form has put their third successive championship in doubt. And

the stock has suffered as the football sector continues to lose fans, hardly helped by a spectacular own goal by Newcastle United directors.

Man Utd's shares slipped another 2p to 139.5p yesterday reflecting disappointment that the club failed to announce a blockbuster new sponsorship deal, choosing instead to renew its contract with Sharp for the next two years. There are also fears that a sharp rise in players wages could dent profit progress.

Nevertheless, pre-transfer profits rose a healthy 11 per cent to £17.5m, despite a £1.5m rise in players costs. And to bracket Man Utd with other football clubs is to ignore its real strength of its brand name.

An imminent tie-up with a Far Eastern retailer, a stake in a new hotel next to Old Trafford and its new television channel hint at some of the possibilities available to the club over the next few years. Rising television income from the new BSkyB deal should offset any hike in costs. Then there is pay per view. Man Utd

could eventually make a killing, although it could take several years to get the ball rolling.

Analysts forecast full-year profits of around £28m, putting the shares on a prospective p/e ratio of 18. Whether or not Man Utd wins the Premiership, the club remains in a league of its own financially. The share price weakness represents a good buying opportunity.

Newsquest profits rise

NEWSQUEST is a clear example of what can be done with an unfashionable business when management concentrate on nothing else. When Reed Elsevier and Pearson decided to sell their regional newspaper divisions they were applauded by investors for dumping dull businesses.

So how come Newsquest is doing so well? The company, which bought the Reed and Pearson divisions with the help of US buyout specialists Kohlberg Kravis Roberts before joining the market at a share price of 250p last October, has managed to revitalise them. Full-year results for 1997, published yesterday, showed operating profits of £70m - up 43 per cent on the previous year on a pro-forma basis.

According to Jim Brown, Newsquest's chairman, that performance is down to two factors. First, the cost savings from integrating the Pearson and Reed businesses, which will be about £5m-a-year when complete. Also important is investment - Pearson had starved its division of new machinery. Newsquest spent £10m on capital spending last year and is likely to splash out £15m this year.

Newsquest is also building up its online services, using its local newspaper websites as a gateway for local advertising. And while Newsquest is benefiting from rising advertising revenues, it remains vulnerable to any downturn. Analysts forecast 1998 profits of £66m, placing the shares, up 3.5p to 293p yesterday, on a forward p/e ratio of 13. Good long-term value.

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'controls'

strial claims up

chief moves

Government
sells Mersey
Docks stake
for £70m



OUTLOOK ON THE GERMAN BID FOR ROLLS, THE VALUE OF BRANDS AND THE DEPARTURE OF SIR DESMOND PITCHER

Bavarians take another drive down nostalgia lane

BERND Pischetsrieder, the chairman of BMW, has a nostalgic attachment to Britain's motoring heritage and a pair of very deep pockets. It was his obsession with the Wolseley and Riley that made him buy Rover four years ago.

Yesterday he was overcome by the Spirit of Ecstasy and walked off with Rolls-Royce, the only important marque left in British hands.

The boys from Bavaria are still waiting for Mr Pischetsrieder's previous bout of nostalgia to pay off. Since 1994 BMW has invested more than £2bn in Rover only to see it run up losses of £350m and allow its market share to drift down to around 10 per cent.

It might have got within sight of a profit this year, even under German accounting conventions, but the strong pound has dashed those hopes.

Rolls-Royce is not quite the same. Unlike Rover, it is genuinely a trophy asset. Whatever else is said about British craftsmanship, the Roller remains a byword for luxury and style.

It is the most famous marque in the world. Unlike Rover, Rolls is also profitable. Six years ago its current owners,

Vickers, sensibly allied some modern management techniques to all the walnut, leather and wool at Crewe and turned Rolls into a business that could break-even at 1400 cars a year.

Current production is bumping along at just under 2,000. But Mr Pischetsrieder has big plans to triple production at Crewe, double the workforce and stretch the Bentley brand to include a sports car.

He already has a rather dashing prototype to work on. The Java, which Vickers unveiled at Geneva five years ago but then ran out of money to develop, was based on a BMW's platform and is just waiting to be taken from the drawing board.

There's the rub. Vickers just didn't have the cash to keep refuelling Rolls and in the absence of a credible British bid, there was a horrible inevitability about the business passing into foreign hands.

The pantomime horse called the Rolls-Royce Acquisition Consortium may make life uncomfortable for Sir Colin Chandler at the egn. But unless they have taken leave of their senses, Vickers shareholders will not turn down an

offer that values Rolls at thirty times earnings and gives it as secure a future as it is every going to have.

Bacardi pays a rum old price

THE astronomical price fetched by Dewar's and Bombay Gin is another striking example of the power of brands. The directors of Diageo could scarcely have dreamed they would get £1.15bn for the two brands when they were forced to action them off to get the Grand Guinness merger past the competition authorities. But in stepped Bacardi, desperate to become a force to be reckoned with in the spirits market and keen not to miss out on a buying opportunity unlikely to be repeated for some time.

Diageo probably cannot believe its luck. The group played a successful game of poker with the competition authorities, offering first to sell minor brands but knowing all the time it was willing to sacrifice Dewar's. The Federal Trade Commission and the EC took the bait and left Diageo with the brands it really wanted. Dewar's may be the leading whisky in the US, but its sales have been

falling over the last few years in a tough market. Diageo has been allowed to keep international best sellers Johnnie Walker and J&B. And the loss of Bombay Sapphire will not be too hard to bear as Diageo has held on to the much bigger gin brands Gordon's and Gilbey's. No wonder Diageo's shareholders remain in party mood.

The rise and fall of King Des

SO FAREWELL then Sir Desmond Pitcher on this your last day in charge at United Utilities. Progress With Responsibility, that was your catchphrase. Bad luck for you the shareholders decided they would get more progress if someone else was made responsible.

Once you were King Des of the North West, the man who mixed water with electricity and lived to tell the tale. You invented the multi-utility and spawned a host of imitators with silly names like Hyder.

For a time all was well and the good citizens of Manchester were grateful indeed for their water rebate. But then the muttering began. No man is an island and

no share price can underperform the index for two years without questions being asked. And lo, the Court of King Des was split asunder. A man called Staples came from the east (Barma Construction, actually) and wondered aloud whether a Footsie stock should be run like one man's personal fiefdom. You did for him before he could dethrone you. But the damage was done and the Army of Good Corporate Governance scented blood. Your successor comes from a land to the west, Sellafield, where the water is warm all year round, at least in the sea. Sir Christopher Harding not have your vision. But then he is only there as non-exec chairman having plenty of other jobs to keep him busy.

You, however, do not. This is also your last day as chairman of the Merseyside Development Corporation, which is being closed down to make way for New Labour's regional development agencies. That just leaves the job as deputy chairman of Everton and even they look like candidates for the drop this season.

But never fear, your legacy lives on. Some day we will all live in the kingdom of King Des. One supplier, one utility bill, one regulator. In the meantime, enjoy the golf.

HSBC flies to Canary

By Lea Paterson

HSBC Holdings, the banking giant which owns Midland Bank, is to move from the City to Canary Wharf at cost of £500m.

The bank is to build a 41-storey headquarters which will house 8,000 employees.

Staff at 10 HSBC buildings in the City are scheduled to move to Canary Wharf. This includes employees at HSBC's headquarters in Lower Thames Street and at Midland Bank's headquarters near Bank, as well as investment banking, treasury, insurance and asset management staff.

John Bond, group chief executive, said: "It has become increasingly evident to us that having our businesses and support departments located in different premises is far from satisfactory. We have decided that it would be in the best interests of the group if most of our London-based operations

— other than our branches — could be housed together."

Staff reaction was mixed, according to one source. Many were yesterday unaware of the decision to move.

The bank will acquire both the building and the naming rights from Canary Wharf under a 999-year lease. The building will link directly to London Underground's Jubilee Line extension.

The bank said it had considered many locations. "The agreement we have reached with Canary Wharf meets all our criteria," Mr Bond said.

The City and Canary Wharf have been engaged in a long-running battle to house London's banking community. Banks that have chosen Canary Wharf since the 1980s include Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, Credit Suisse First Boston and Barclays Capital. Others, such as Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Bank, have spurned Canary Wharf.

UBS 'was warned over controls'

UBS yesterday declined to comment on a report that Mathis Caballavetta, the Swiss bank's chief executive, was warned of inadequate controls on derivative trading in London five years ago. According to the *SonntagsZeitung* newspaper, Hans-Peter Bauer, formerly head of derivatives at the bank, voiced concerns to UBS top management in 1993. Earlier this year, the bank admitted losing almost £200m on equity derivative and proprietary equity trading in 1997.

Industrial claims up

INDIVIDUAL claims to industrial tribunals have reached a record high, according to the conciliation service Acas. Complaints have increased for the 10th year in succession. Acas received nearly 107,000 claims on industrial rights issues, two out of five involving unfair dismissal — 6.5 per cent up on 1996.

MFI chief moves

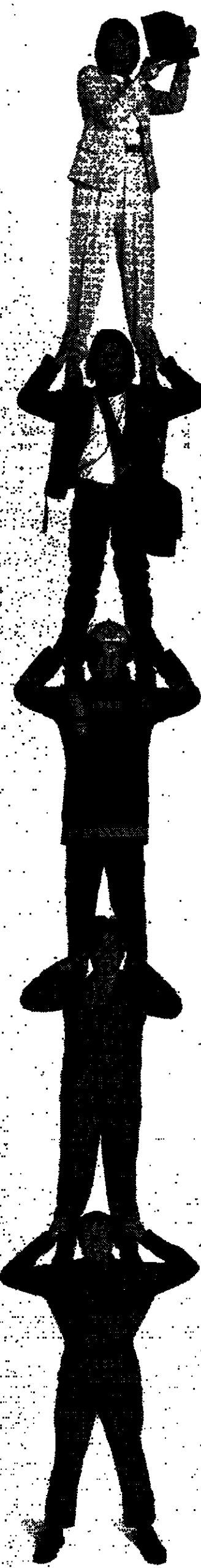
MFI, the troubled furniture retailer, has replaced the head of its retail business in an attempt to improve performance. John O'Connell is giving up his responsibilities as retail director to take control of the merchandising operations. He will remain in the main board. Matthew Ingle, head of MFI's Howden Joinery division, has been promoted to retail director but will not be on the main board.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Andrews Systems (F)	59.01m (55.50m)	11.78m (7.90m)	50.1p (35.8p)	15.0p (10.0p)
Ascent Holdings (F)	191.0m (88.1m)	30.2m (5.9m)	30.5p (10.5p)	0.0p (-)
Autograde (F)	152.8m (180.4m)	191.4m (44.8m)	107.0p (19.3p)	7.0p (5.5p)
Baltek Mining (F)	3.75m (3.34m)	0.38m (0.16m)	2.16p (1.26p)	0.0p (0.81p)
Bell Group (F)	2.319m (2.160m)	353.0m (204.8m)	29.0p (25.5p)	14.5p (13.3p)
Bentley Systems (F)	-	0.44m (0.69m)	1.01p (0.78p)	1.2p (1.2p)
Bentley Systems (F)	26.08m (32.84m)	-4.4m (1.8m)	-2.86p (2.00p)	nil (1.7p)
British Land's Estates (F)	102.98m (2.38m)	0.40m (0.14m)	0.43p (0.19p)	nil (-)
British Land (F)	2.46m (1.82m)	0.173m (0.129m)	0.09p (0.07p)	nil (-)
British Steel (F)	9.80m (9.25m)	0.38m (0.64m)	2.70p (3.01p)	1.5p (1.6p)
British Telecom (F)	81.54m (72.41m)	5.84m (4.84m)	24.1p (22.4p)	5.5p (7.7p)
British Telecommunications (F)	80.83m (45.15m)	7.94m (4.47m)	25.5p (10.7p)	5.5p (7.7p)
British Telecom (F)	48.78m (43.71m)	3.88m (1.21m)	51.8p (16.4p)	8.5p (4.8p)
British Telecom (F)	-	1.82m (1.78m)	2.4p (2.29p)	0.8 (0.7p)
British Telecom (F)	44.9m (51.1m)	24.2p (37.3p)	24.54p (-)	-
British Telecom (F)	63.21m (55.10m)	10.1m (8.85m)	17.7p (12.0p)	6.0p (-)
British Telecom (F)	51.8m (50.1m)	14.9m (18.6m)	4.6p (4.8p)	0.52p (0.475p)
British Telecom (F)	82.58m (78.58m)	3.72m (2.9m)	13.8p (11.25p)	6.0 p (-)
British Telecom (F)	2.65m (1.13m)	-0.052m (0.03m)	-0.02p (0.03p)	nil (-)
British Telecom (F)	12.88m (11.48m)	0.828m (0.488m)	10.27p (6.71p)	0.5p (-)
British Telecom (F)	185.0m (182.2m)	15.01m (13.50m)	17.4p (16.1p)	0.2p (0.6p)
British Telecom (F)	21.02m (18.97m)	7.28m (1.47m)	18.2p (4.2p)	2.2p (2.0p)
British Telecom (F)	545.1m (500.2m)	20.01m (17.72m)	19.7p (17.36p)	6.3p (7.76p)
British Telecom (F)	5.24m (0.08m)	-0.2m (0.8m)	-1.8p (0.4p)	nil (1.28p)
British Telecom (F)	34.77m (34.47m)	0.272m (0.917m)	10.80p (31.48p)	5.70p (5.10p)
BT - Profit (F)	-	-	-	-

BT - Profit (F) - Interim *Dividend to be paid as a PD

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CBI THE TIMES

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[illegible]

Money game turns surreal

TECHNICALLY, Opening Day takes place under the sign of Aries, the ram with his curling horns. Today, however, a more familiar symbol reigns in the baseball's heavens as the 1998 season begins, in America's age-old sporting rite of spring. It is shaped like the letter "S", but bisected by two vertical lines.

The five months since that unforgettable late October night when the Florida Marlins won the World Series in that seventh-game, riveting-innings climax against the Cleveland Indians have provided their human stories - ranging from the star Cuban players who set to sea in a rickety 19th boat to escape Fidel Castro to the bizarre sacking of Davey Johnson, the manager who compiled 1997's best regular season record, by the capricious Baltimore Orioles. But in this close season, the real news has been money, money and more money.

A fortnight ago, Rupert Murdoch paid \$311m (£185m), more than any man has paid for a baseball franchise, to complete the Los Angeles Dodgers' 20th century journey from Brooklyn's backyard team to arm of a multinational media conglomerate. Then there are the two expansion teams, the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Tampa Bay Devil Rays.

Major League baseball starts in style today. Rupert Cornwell on a new comfort zone

Their onfield prowess is yet unknown, but not their ambitions. The Diamondbacks open tonight against the Colorado Rockies, and the baseball will have to be sensational to match the setting of the brand-new Bank One Ballpark on the edge of downtown Phoenix. At \$355m (£197m), it is the most expensive sports arena built in the United States. It is a triumph of air-conditioning over nature, complete with a 517ft retractable plastic roof to ward off those 115F Arizona warm spells, and a swimming pool directly above the right centre-field fence.



Glove at first sight: Edgardo Alfonzo, of the New York Mets, is tagged by Baltimore Oriole's Chris Hoiles in the team's final game of spring training

proves that romance and baseball's boardrooms never had much in common. On the field, though, the sport still tugs the heartstrings. Remember Livan Hernandez, the Cuban defector who pitched Florida to glory last year? His elder brother Orlando (aka "El Duque"), in his prime an even better pitcher, was one of those who took the small boat route across the Florida Straits in 1997, and now wears the Yankees pinstripes.

Tyre threat to McLaren dominance

Motor racing

By David Tremayne

IN THE wake of yet another belittling demonstration of McLaren-Mercedes' current domination of Formula One, the Brazilian Grand Prix at the weekend brought in its wake just one pressing question. What do McLaren's rivals have to do to stand any chance of getting on terms with the Silver Arrows before it is too late?

In Melbourne rivals placed much store on McLaren's "fiddle brake" system, but the cars raced without it on Sunday and were as crushingly superior as they had been Down Under. For Patrick Head, technical director at Williams, by far the most significant part of the performance equation is the tyres. McLaren's Bridgestones have a clear edge over the Goodyears used by their principal rivals, Williams and Ferrari. "We designed our car to be easy on the tyres," Head said. "Aerodynamics are part and parcel of that, producing aerodynamic behaviour that is very stable and doesn't fluctuate a lot depending on the attitude of the car, so that you don't have to run very stiff suspension and thus risk damaging the tyres."

"In some extent we possibly sacrificed some peak aerodynamic performance in order to achieve good stability, and one of the things we are looking at now is whether we would be better off to have the aerodynamics a little bit more peaky and less kind to the tyres." The whole car is an interactive entity between suspension dynamics and aerodynamics, as well as the tyres, so if you get a tyre that behaves very differently you often have to set the car up very differently. Much has been muttered about an aerodynamic advantage on the McLaren, but Head disagrees. "I have to say that I haven't really seen all our rivals cars close to, but at the moment it is a combination of factors working together on the McLaren that is producing the result," he said. "I suppose the McLaren looks to be the best, but the Ferrari is a neat little car and I don't think there is too much wrong with that or our car."

Kostecki pips Standbridge in the battle of the sluggers

Sailing

By Stuart Alexander
in Fort Lauderdale, Florida

THEY slugged it out for the last 1,200 miles to the finish, never more than five miles apart, most of the time less than three, and only 1,000 yards, two minutes and 53 seconds separated them at the end.

At the wire here in the race for sixth place in the sixth leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race, it was John Kostecki in Chessie Racing who had the edge over Paul Standbridge in Toshiba.

Kostecki, both legs bandaged after five days out of commission with a rash that became infected crossing the Equator, was all too aware of the value of those extra yards, which earned 11 extra points and kept Chessie in fourth place overall behind the leader, EF Lan-

guage, Swedish Match and Merit Cup. Kostecki, who could still finish second or third overall, was slowed by repeated spinaker damage when the rest of the fleet was sailing fast. He also had to stop to allow crewman Antonio Piris to dive over the side and clear a length of rope from the rudder and propeller.

"It has been a full on match race which, perhaps, was even harder because it was for sixth and seventh instead of first and second. Anyone who comes second in a match race is disappointed," said Standbridge, who had hoped to finish in the top places to make up for Toshiba's disqualification from the last leg for failing to report use of the engine.

Standbridge, who still hopes to win at least one leg of the three remaining legs, has yet to decide who will be the 12th man for leg seven from here to Baltimore. "Dennis Conner [the syndicate head] is always welcome to join the boat and would be a big asset to the crew," he said.

The last two boats, Brunel Sunergy and the all-woman crewed EF Education, were expected to reach Fort Lauderdale overnight. A tug has been sent to tow Tracy Edwards' crippled catamaran, Royal and Sun Alliance, into the Chilean port of Puer-

to Montt. Edwards and her crew, whose non-stop round the world attempt ended when the boat's mast broke, expect to step ashore tomorrow after 57 days at sea.

PHILIPS



Today we publish the results of The Independent Fantasy Football League. The league table includes all scores up to 8 March. The player list includes scores from all games played until 22 March. Neither set of scores includes results from the FA Cup. The overall winner at the end of the season will win a pair of tickets to the World Cup finals in France this summer.

Every time one of your players score you get four points. There are four points for a keeper or a defender every time their team keeps a clean sheet. If a player scores the winning goal, i.e. if there is a one goal difference in the scoreline, the player scoring the final goal for the winning team is awarded 1 bonus point awarded in addition to standard goal related points. Each successful Assist, a pass judged by our experts to lead directly to a goal, will give a player 3 points. The opinion of our experts on the matter is final. Each player selected and starting a game will be awarded one point.

If a player is given a Yellow Card they lose 1 point, if a player is given a Red Card they lose 3 points. Own goals, either scored or conceded, do not count. The Premiership Manager that you choose will be awarded 3 points if their real-life team wins, 1 point is awarded if they draw and no points are given if they lose. Updated player scores and league tables will be published every Tuesday in The Independent and repeated the following Sunday in The Independent on Sunday.

HOW TO SCORE	
player score	4
clean sheet	4
winning goal	1
successful assist	3
Yellow Card	-1
Red Card	-3
manager's team wins	3
draw	1
loss	0

INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

LEAGUE TABLE			
CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 8 MARCH			
POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS
1	Mr D Edmington	Edmo United	951
2	Mr J Hayes	Early Birds	943
3	Mr Archer	No Wright	939
4	Mr C King	Feeking Victory	939
5	Mr P Tuller	Pin Ups 4	939
6	Mr D Evans	Booths End Old Boys	939
7	Mr J Cox	Southville FC	939
8	Mr D Baker	Deja Vu	934
9	Mr B Sari	Simply The Best	933
10	Mr A Chuadi	Nikes 9th 11	932
11	Mr D Sari	The Untouchables	929
12	Mr S Aston	Billy Boys 2nd 11	929
13	Mr S Scott	Unfeatable	927
14	Mr I Bewie	Wembley Bounders	924
15	Mr A Wingrove	Tony's Boys	924
16	Mr T Lyons	Diana's Demons	924
17	Mr I Brown	The Hoofers	915
18	Mr S Aston	Billy Boys 3rd 11	914
19	Mr G Bell	The Hairy Monsters	913
20	Mr P Crilland	PDC2	912
21	Miss L Wild	Amerretto FC	910
22	Mr M Ewins	Mikes C Team	910
23	Mr M Pawley	Roberts Raiders	909
24	Mr A Mitchell	Nursery Park Rovers	907
25	Mr A Cunningham	The Zebra	907
26	Mr M Ewins	I've Started But Will I Finish	906
27	Mr M Ewins	Mikes A Team	906
28	Mr A Mitchell	The Eye For It	906
29	Mr S Scott	The Dream Team	905
30	Mr T Brazier	Wow For Short	905
31	Mr K Boyle	Clogston Rovers	903
32	Mr D Aukroyd	Jack's Lads	903
33	Mr J McCrossam	Washed Up Army	902
34	Mr M Ewins	Mikes B Team	900
35	Mr G Smith	The Jolly Come Lately	900
36	No Name	Leo Dis	989
37	Mr D Thomas	Scouthrope Extras	987
38	Mr Brady	Look Lively	896
39	Mr I Cor	Retro Rovers	896
40	Mr I Baker	Dynamo Mambo	891
41	Mr A Cottrell	Bray D'Ynomo	891
42	Mr P Tuller	Pin Up 2	891

GOALKEEPERS				DEFENDERS				MIDFIELDERS				STRIKERS				MANAGERS													
TEAM	NAME	W	OF	VALUE	TEAM	NAME	W	OF	VALUE	TEAM	NAME	W	OF	VALUE	TEAM	NAME	W	OF	VALUE										
300	Seaman	ARS	0	49	4.0	401	Dixon	ARS	0	38	2.5	503	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	600	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	700	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
301	Law	ARS	0	31	1.0	402	Upson	ARS	0	11	3.0	504	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	601	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	701	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
302	Managers	ARS	0	30	3.0	403	Pick	ARS	0	7	4.2	505	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	602	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	702	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
303	Bonny	AV	0	30	1.0	404	Graham	ARS	0	41	2.7	506	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	603	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	703	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
304	Kates	ARS	0	29	1.0	405	Womersley	ARS	0	40	1.5	507	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	604	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	704	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
305	Watson	BAR	0	28	1.0	406	Womersley	ARS	0	39	4.5	508	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	605	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	705	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
306	Law	ARS	0	27	1.0	407	Womersley	ARS	0	38	4.5	509	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	606	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	706	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
307	Flowers	BLA	0	26	1.0	408	Womersley	ARS	0	37	4.5	510	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	607	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	707	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
308	Flowers	BLA	0	25	1.0	409	Womersley	ARS	0	36	4.5	511	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	608	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	708	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
309	Flowers	BLA	0	24	1.0	410	Womersley	ARS	0	35	4.5	512	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	609	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	709	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
310	Flowers	BLA	0	23	1.0	411	Womersley	ARS	0	34	4.5	513	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	610	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	710	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
311	Flowers	BLA	0	22	1.0	412	Womersley	ARS	0	33	4.5	514	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	611	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	711	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
312	Flowers	BLA	0	21	1.0	413	Womersley	ARS	0	32	4.5	515	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	612	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	712	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
313	Flowers	BLA	0	20	1.0	414	Womersley	ARS	0	31	4.5	516	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	613	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	713	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
314	Flowers	BLA	0	19	1.0	415	Womersley	ARS	0	30	4.5	517	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	614	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	714	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
315	Flowers	BLA	0	18	1.0	416	Womersley	ARS	0	29	1.2	518	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	615	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	715	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
316	Flowers	BLA	0	17	1.0	417	Womersley	ARS	0	28	1.2	519	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	616	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	716	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
317	Flowers	BLA	0	16	1.0	418	Womersley	ARS	0	27	1.2	520	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	617	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	717	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
318	Flowers	BLA	0	15	1.0	419	Womersley	ARS	0	26	1.2	521	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	618	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	718	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
319	Flowers	BLA	0	14	1.0	420	Womersley	ARS	0	25	1.2	522	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	619	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	719	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
320	Flowers	BLA	0	13	1.0	421	Womersley	ARS	0	24	1.2	523	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	620	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	720	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
321	Flowers	BLA	0	12	1.0	422	Womersley	ARS	0	23	1.2	524	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	621	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	721	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
322	Flowers	BLA	0	11	1.0	423	Womersley	ARS	0	22	1.2	525	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	622	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	722	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
323	Flowers	BLA	0	10	1.0	424	Womersley	ARS	0	21	1.2	526	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	623	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	723	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
324	Flowers	BLA	0	9	1.0	425	Womersley	ARS	0	20	1.2	527	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	624	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	724	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
325	Flowers	BLA	0	8	1.0	426	Womersley	ARS	0	19	1.2	528	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	625	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	725	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
326	Flowers	BLA	0	7	1.0	427	Womersley	ARS	0	18	1.2	529	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	626	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	726	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
327	Flowers	BLA	0	6	1.0	428	Womersley	ARS	0	17	1.2	530	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	627	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	727	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
328	Flowers	BLA	0	5	1.0	429	Womersley	ARS	0	16	1.2	531	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	628	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	728	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
329	Flowers	BLA	0	4	1.0	430	Womersley	ARS	0	15	1.2	532	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	629	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	729	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
330	Flowers	BLA	0	3	1.0	431	Womersley	ARS	0	14	1.2	533	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	630	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	730	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
331	Flowers	BLA	0	2	1.0	432	Womersley	ARS	0	13	1.2	534	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	631	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	731	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
332	Flowers	BLA	0	1	1.0	433	Womersley	ARS	0	12	1.2	535	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	632	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	732	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
333	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	434	Womersley	ARS	0	11	1.2	536	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	633	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	733	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
334	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	435	Womersley	ARS	0	10	1.2	537	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	634	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	734	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
335	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	436	Womersley	ARS	0	9	1.2	538	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	635	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	735	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
336	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	437	Womersley	ARS	0	8	1.2	539	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	636	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	736	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
337	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	438	Womersley	ARS	0	7	1.2	540	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	637	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	737	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
338	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	439	Womersley	ARS	0	6	1.2	541	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	638	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	738	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
339	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	440	Womersley	ARS	0	5	1.2	542	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	639	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	739	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
340	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	441	Womersley	ARS	0	4	1.2	543	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	640	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	740	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
341	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	442	Womersley	ARS	0	3	1.2	544	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	641	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	741	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
342	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	443	Womersley	ARS	0	2	1.2	545	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	642	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	742	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
343	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	444	Womersley	ARS	0	1	1.2	546	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	643	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	743	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
344	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	445	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	547	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	644	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	744	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
345	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	446	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	548	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	645	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	745	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
346	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	447	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	549	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	646	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	746	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
347	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	448	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	550	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	647	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	747	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
348	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	449	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	551	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	648	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	748	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
349	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	450	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	552	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	649	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	749	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
350	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	451	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	553	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	650	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	750	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
351	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	452	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	554	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	651	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	751	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
352	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	453	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	555	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	652	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	752	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
353	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	454	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	556	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	653	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	753	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
354	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	455	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	557	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	654	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	754	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
355	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	456	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	558	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	655	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	755	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
356	Flowers	BLA	0	0	1.0	457	Womersley	ARS	0	0	1.2	559	Wright	LIV	0	10	1.0	656	Sheep	LEE	0	0	3.5	756	Wenger	ARS	0	34	7.5
357	Flowers																												

Players should not expect to make a full-time living out of the game



ALAN WATKINS

ON RUGBY

ALL the rugby followers I meet are fed up with the continuing wrangle - more exactly, the blazing row - between Cliff Brittle of the Rugby Football Union and assorted Mr Moueybags from the leading clubs. The fans think that everything can be sorted out with a little give and take and a bit of goodwill on both sides.

This, alas, is the trouble. Goodwill is the commodity that is in distinctly short supply. One might as well ask for more of it among Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims or between the two communities in Northern Ireland.

Or, as a leading article in the old *Manchester Guardian* once put it: "It is greatly to be hoped that persons of goodwill and

moderation will come together, and wiser counsels yet prevail."

My own view is that things have gone too far, and that some structure on the lines of the Football Association and Football League will have to be set up.

I also believe that, where there is acute controversy about money, and to whom it properly belongs, the only people who can resolve matters are judges. That, after all, is their job. I have come to this conclusion reluctantly, because the only people who are guaranteed to benefit from litigation are the lawyers.

However, that a judge may know nothing about the game does not bother me in the least. Instead of "who is Gazza?" he may ask: "Who is this Mr Dallaglio? Is he Italian, by any

chance?" This does not matter. All a judge needs to know is that the captain of England, who also happens to be captain of his club, Wasps, has entered into a separate contract with the RFU - assuming, for the moment, that Lawrence Dallaglio has indeed entered into such an agreement.

To pronounce on questions of this nature no judge needs to have a knowledge of rugby, still less of what is called "ordinary life" - which is assumed to consist largely of knowing about pop music and current films.

Nevertheless, the instinct that these troublesome matters should, as far as possible, be kept away from the gentlemen in wigs is a sound one. If a conflict can be resolved, it is always better to resolve it by agreement.

The fundamental difficulty is that rugby cannot survive in its present professional form without huge injections of cash from television. It is doubtful whether it can survive wholly professionally even with these subsidies. The nearest equivalent is county cricket, which likewise maintains a professional structure that is not justified by the level of public support.

Last Saturday, for instance, Wasps v Sale at Loftus Road drew an embarrassingly small crowd of 3,500. That number would have fitted, just about, into the club's old ground at Sudbury.

Quite apart from this consideration, I doubt whether rugby should be played at the Queen's Park Rangers ground

at all. There are laws about the size of the playing area, less flexible than those for football; and Loftus Road is simply too small.

The question of home advantage is something else. Wasps v Sale at a neutral ground would probably have resulted in an even lower attendance. But in principle cup semi-finals should surely be held at such grounds.

The 9,000 at Franklin's Gardens for, on the afternoon, the better game of Northampton v Saracens was not much to shout about either. The only English clubs I can think of that would draw five-figure crowds at home are Leicester and Bath. In France, by contrast, the cup semi-finals (played on neutral

grounds, on the Saturday and Sunday) between them draw a crowd in excess of 30,000.

I was always in favour both of professionalism and of full interchangeability between union and league. But by "professionalism" I meant that players should be paid for their trouble, their effort and the disruption of their social life - not that they should expect to make a full-time living out of the game.

In this respect rugby union has modelled itself on football rather than on the old rugby league, as it should have done had its organisers been more realistic.

It has modelled itself on football in another respect as well. Clubs have become rich

men's baubles. No doubt Newcastle and Saracens would not be the forces they now are if, respectively, Sir John Hall and Nigel Wray had not invested in them. But I do not think the change is for the good of the game all the same.

This does not mean I support Brittle and Fran Cotton in their attempt to regionalise rugby: far from it. London v North-west at Loftus Road would have been lucky to draw 1,500.

The short-term palliative is a rationalisation of the fixture list, which will mean that the preliminary European matches and, maybe, more matches generally will have to be played in mid-week. But the conflict may have gone too far for this remedy to work on its own.

Mighty mouth Rios grows in stature

MARCELO RIOS is accustomed to being given a Chile reception and a chilly reception, both of which he brings upon himself. Installed yesterday as the first world No 1 from Latin America after defeating Andre Agassi in straight sets in Sunday's final of the Lipton Championships here, he is reckoned to have the best hands and worst mouth since John McEnroe.

Adulated in his homeland since first showing signs of greatness with a tennis racket, the 22-year-old left-hander from Santiago has been known to be rude to autograph hunters and sporting icons alike. No respecter of reputations, nor apparently much else, he has spoken dismissively of Rod Laver and Guillermo Vilas, saying he does not know anything about "those guys with wood rackets", and reportedly told Monica Seles to "move your fat butt" while queuing for lunch at Wimbledon.

Even if his initial reign as the top man in the game lasts no longer than a fortnight (Pete Sampras can return to No 1 if he reaches the semi-finals of his next tournament, in Hong Kong), Rios will go into the European clay-court season on a hat-trick for the "Prix Citron", awarded by journalists covering the French Open for non-cooperation.

While not exactly advancing the cause of humanity, the Lemon Drop Kid's behaviour is not necessarily bad for tennis, bearing in mind the media's McEnroe syndrome - Ban McEnroe! (but bring him back next week so we can ban him again). Like McEnroe, Rios would be the one being told to move his butt were it not for the excellence of his tennis, and he knows it.

At the outset of the Lipton Championships, *Sports Illustrated*, whose noted features on the sport have included "Lead! - The Champion Nobody Wants" and "Is Tennis

John Roberts, in Key Biscayne, Florida, on Latin America's brattish new tennis No 1

Dying?", described Rios as the "Most Hated Man in Tennis". The article did not provoke a protest petition from the rest of the media, and Rios himself dismissed it with a shake of his ponytail as par for the course. "I think this guy that wrote the article knew what he was going to write before the interview," he said. "So that is fine. I don't care what he wrote."

It must be emphasised that

ridden umpteen form swings over the years, has not been the most endearing of players in his dealings with tennis officials, on the court or off. Obscenities, when not punctuated by a towel, have punctuated many of his matches, including those which brought him an Olympic Games gold medal in Atlanta. He once publicly referred to the former president of the International Federation, Philippe Chatrier, and his colleagues as "bozos" following objections to his garish outfits.

For many tennis followers, Agassi's shortcomings have been overlooked because of his charisma and mischievous charm. Rios seems sincere when he says he does not care what people think about him.

Lindsay Davenport, the tall American who is No 2 behind Martina Hingis in the women's game, ventured the view that being No 1 without having won a Grand Slam title was not such a big deal. Rios barely used a backswing in returning the shot. "Winning a Grand Slam is easy for girls," he said. "They should be No 1 really easy."

Agassi, while acknowledging that Rios has risen on merit, declared that: "He'll have to win a Slam this year to be No 1 in the players' eyes and to be No 1 in his own eyes."

Rios pointed out that the tour is played "over a lot of tournaments, not only Grand Slams" and emphasised that he had been "playing all year, trying to improve my ranking".

Tim Henman, the only player to take a set off Rios last week, sides with the Chilean. "Ranking points don't lie," the British No 2 said. "You've got to earn every single one of them. Rios has accumulated the most in the last 12 months. His results speak for themselves. I definitely think he deserves it."

Agassi, whose popularity has

most of the criticism regarding Rios's behaviour concerns his dealings with people off the court. He does not have a history of tantrums during matches. His aggressive baseline game, reminiscent of Agassi at his best, prompted the *New York Times* to describe Rios as the "Chilean Agassi". Asked what it was like to play against his clone, the 27-year-old from Las Vegas replied: "I'm not sure if you just insulted me or gave me a compliment. I don't have long hair any more, man."

Agassi, whose popularity has

Henman on the rise
Tim Henman is up to No 15 in the latest world rankings following his performance in reaching the semi-finals of the Lipton's Championships in Key Biscayne last week.

1 M Rios (Chile)	5645 points
2 P Sampras (US)	3650
3 P Korda (Czech)	3443
4 P Rafter (Aus)	3271
5 G Rusedski (GB)	3094
6 Y Kafelnikov (Rus)	3027
7 A Corretja (Sp)	2708
8 J Bjorkman (Swe)	2683
9 R Krajcek (Neth)	2328
10 G Kuerten (Fra)	2282
11 M Chang (US)	2200
12 K Kucera (Slovak)	2141
13 F Mantilla (Sp)	2108
14 C Plietnie (Lith)	1890
15 T Henman (GB)	1847
16 M Philippoussis (Aus)	1787
17 C Moyes (Sp)	1858
18 A Beranek (Sp)	1837
19 S Bruguera (Sp)	1810
20 T Enqvist (Swe)	1574



Lemon Drop Kid: Marcelo Rios seems unconcerned that he has yet to win a Grand Slam

Photograph: AFP

It is not that Rios is inclined to brag about his status. "Maybe in this moment I am playing better than anyone, but I don't think the other players have no chance to beat me," he said. "I don't think of myself (as being) on another level. I don't think like that. I always say that even if you're No 1, you're not really there. You can lose. Everybody has a chance to beat me."

Rios's natural talent has ma-

tured under the guidance of Larry Stefanki, who regards success in the Grand Slams as a priority ("when it's all over, that's what they remember"). Stefanki advised McEnroe during the turbulent one of his later years on the regular circuit. "Johnny was, quite unquote, difficult. People said if I could last with McEnroe, I could handle Marcelo," Stefanki told the *Miami Herald*. "We've had

our moments, but Marcelo is getting better. He's just turning into a man."

"He's not going to be gregarious in the locker-room or act like Bill Clinton. He's very cut and dried. That's why we're still together. Coming from South America and getting thrown into the worldwide spectrum can be intimidating."

When first asked to take a look at the 5ft 9in Rios by the

player's agent, Stefanki's immediate reaction was, "this kid is so stinking small." He soon came to see larger qualities when Rios took on the game's big servers. "He loves taking on that challenge," he said. "He's driven inside. People don't see it. There are a lot of layers, and underneath, it burns."

And he does make a point of smiling in public at least once a month.

Super League follows Aussies

Rugby League

By Dave Hadfield

THE third season of Super League received a double boost yesterday with the announcement of record prize-money for the winners and reassurance that there will be a full complement of 12 teams competing for it.

The winners of the inaugural IJB Sports Grand Final at Old Trafford in October will take home £275,000, compared with the £120,000 finishing first was worth to the Bradford Bulls last year.

The whole format is different this year. "There is no trophy and no prize-money for finishing first at the end of the league season," said Super League's managing director, Maurice Lindsay, at the Old Trafford launch for the new season. "Everything is geared to making the top five and going into the finals series."

That finals series is based unashamedly on the Australian system, where the leading five clubs play off against each other, leading to a Grand Final.

Matthew Elliott, the coach of the defending champions, who start their defence against the newcomers of Huddersfield this Friday night, welcomes the change.

"We are really looking forward to it at Bradford," he said. "The objective is to make the top five and then it is a new competition. It means that your most important match of the season is your last one."

For Hull, on the other hand, their most important match this season could be their first. Lindsay was able to announce that the crisis, which saw their chairman, David Lloyd, walk out last week, was over and that the Sharks were not about to sink.

The club's captain, Alan Hume, repeated the message that all would be well, both for the opening fixture at Sheffield on Sunday and beyond.

"The players have had a meeting to clarify a few things and we are 100 per cent behind David Lloyd," he said. "A lot of people have panicked over nothing and there was never any problem as far as the players were concerned."

"It makes no difference to us whether our contracts are held by the club or by David Lloyd. It will be business as usual and our spectators - who are the most important people in all this - won't notice any difference either."

The ambition for the season generally, however, is that the public should notice a difference. The competition will be more heavily promoted than ever and Sky is to put extra technical resources into the televising of the sport.

Salford will impose a life ban on the spectator who attacked the referee, Stuart Cummings, at the end of their Silk Cut Challenge Cup semi-final defeat by Sheffield on Saturday.

The club says that if the man taken into custody after the incident and expected to be charged is shown to be one of their followers, he will never be allowed into The Willows again.

Lindsay has described the claim of a delegation from the Australian Rugby League that they are still owed £400,000 from the 1995 World Cup, for which he was director, as "absolutely

Westwood entranced by America

Golf

By Andy Farrell
in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida

IT WAS Phil Mickelson at the Ryder Cup who pointed out that it was probably Nick Faldo who chose to partner Lee Westwood and not the other way round. "The great thing was that he did what he was told," Faldo said.

"If I said 'hit a three-wood down the fairway' he would do it, if I said 'put it on the green' he would do it and if I said 'knock in the putt' he would do that too," Faldo added. "He's doing all right."

Westwood, only 24, keeps taking strides only marginally smaller than those of a tiger. The latest was his fifth place finish in the US Players' Championship here at Sawgrass on Sunday.

It was his debut at the TPC and three of the four players who finished above him were Open champions in Justin Leonard, Tom Lehman and Mark Calcavecchia. A final-round 69 left Westwood four behind Leonard, the most recent winner at Royal Troon.

Faldo could be seeing a lot more of Westwood in America.

After only two events this year Westwood has won \$183,500 (£113,270) and is only \$16,500 (£10,000) away from earning the right to join the US Tour and gain unlimited invitations for the year.

Safe in the knowledge he will qualify for a card next year, Westwood may not join the US Tour for this season and stick to his planned 13 or 14 events. That would prevent a potentially embarrassing clash for, at his present rate, he may qualify for the elite 30-man, \$4m Tour Championship, which is scheduled opposite the Volvo Masters, where he is the defending champion.

But Westwood has already admitted his goal has changed from trying to be No 1 on the European money list to taking

the chance to improve by playing more in America. He has added the MCI Classic at Hilton Head to a run that continues in New Orleans this week and then the Masters. His next appearance in Europe will be the Benson and Hedges International in May.

This was Westwood's seventh event in the States and he has yet to finish below 29th place. "I like it here. I enjoy quick greens and the challenge of big cutting putts," he said. "The greens at Workshop were always hard and fast in the summer."

Importantly, Westwood seems to be able to learn as he goes along. "You have got to be a quick learner out here. They don't give you a second chance," he said. "I got frustrated with my

putting at Bay Hill, but here my temperament has been good. I stuck in even when I was four over after eight holes of the second round."

Leonard also had to battle over the first couple of rounds. As at the Open, and the Kemper Open, his last win before Troon, the former US Amateur champion started the final day five off the lead.

But when he puts as he did in Ayrshire last July such deficits are quickly overcome and from the 10th to the 15th he single-putted every green. Four were for birdies and a closing 67 gave Leonard a two-stroke victory over Lehman and Glen Day.

As an Open winner, Leonard is in a position to comment on the stature of the 25-year-old Players' Championship. "There are reasons the majors are rated how they are; their history, the venues and the importance players place on them," he said.

"This is not a major championship but it is definitely in a class just below. The importance the players put on this title means this is a special win for me."

Leonard's only problem now is the fact that no Players' champion has gone on to win the Masters in the same year.

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Canon personal copiers

Knight eager for ultimate test

ONE of the dangers for the ambitious cricketer, now that one-day and Test cricket are seen as entirely different games, is that success at one tends to mark you out as a distinct species, rather than as a sub-species able to survive in both environments.

Specialisation (the term exists for botanists as well as cricketers) is a problem with which Nick Knight, last Sunday's man of the match, is only too acutely aware. Notching his third one-day century, an innings that helped England to their eighth one-day victory in a row, Knight is also keen to add to his 11 Test caps, but feels one-day cricket is no longer the stepping stone it perhaps was in the past.

England's swashbuckling opener wants another chance to prove his five-day worth. Derek Pringle reports from Bridgetown.

"They are very different forms of cricket now," said the left-hander, who has taken Michael Atherton's place as opener. "I know these games get me back in the shop window, but I haven't approached it with Tests in mind. As far as I'm concerned, it's just good to be back involved and the most important thing for me now is to do well."

Knight does not wear his modesty well, and why should he. His 122 against an attack

bristling with the likes of Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh left many exultant, and Bob Willis—one of those to witness Viv Richards' brutal 189 at Old Trafford from as close as 22 yards—hailed it as one of the best limited-over knocks he had ever seen.

For the majority of players there is no real lasting pleasure from one-day heroics, and only the World Cup—and then only if you reach the final—possesses anything like the lures of a Test match.

Knight knows this, and following last winter's tour of Zimbabwe and New Zealand, which saw his technique disintegrate almost as badly as his left index finger (he still has six pins holding it together) has set about rehabilitating himself. In such situations, broken digits are often healed sooner than bad habits, such as Knight's propensity to dabble with, rather than leave, balls just outside his off stump.

"I'm worried about this word 'technique' that flies around. I'm aware that I'm not the perfect technician, but I work at it. Everybody has to constantly update their technique, but it doesn't happen overnight or just by clicking your fingers."

Like Atherton did last autumn, Knight has been having one-to-one sessions with Graham Gooch, his former captain at Essex, and more recently the manager of the England A tour to Kenya and Sri Lanka, captained by Knight.



Highly honoured: Nick Knight's innings of 122 against West Indies has drawn comparisons with Viv Richards at his best

"I've had three or four sessions and they've been a great help. Deep down, though, I know I've got to go back to Warwickshire this summer and score runs in the Championship. Although I prefer to open, I'll bat anywhere for England, but I need

runs first to put me in the frame."

Before that happens, he has four more one-day internationals in the Caribbean, including another at the Kensington Oval, scene of that marvellous hundred. Indeed, could his blitzkrieg ever be topped?

"I don't think you ever really know how good you are going to be. You just keep trying to improve. Sunday's knock probably was one of my best. But I'll keep working in the hope that there's more, and better to come, in all forms of the game."

First one-day international scoreboard		
West Indies won toss		
England		
N V Knight not out	122	117 runs, 130 balls, 4 fours
A J Stewart b Lewis	10	19 runs, 65 balls, 1 four
G A Gooch b Stanger	29	49 runs, 30 balls, 1 five
GA Hick b White	20	34 runs, 50 balls, 2 fours
19 min, 39 balls, 1 five		
10 runs, 15 balls		
A J Holliday not out	18	44 runs, 54 balls, 2 fours
14 runs, 14 balls, 2 fours		
M A Atherton b Simmons	20	11 runs, 14 balls, 1 four, 1 six
M V Pringle not out	22	10 runs, 12 balls, 2 fours, 1 six
Extras (D/L)	4	
Total (for 5, 206 min, 50 overs)	288	
Fall: 1-83 (Stewart) 3-227 (Pringle) 3-228 (Knight) 4-229 (Thompson) 5-230 (Gooch) 6-231 (Atherton) 7-232 (Gidman) 8-233 (Pringle) 9-234 (Thompson) 10-235 (Atherton) 11-236 (Gidman) 12-237 (Pringle) 13-238 (Thompson) 14-239 (Atherton) 15-240 (Gidman) 16-241 (Pringle) 17-242 (Thompson) 18-243 (Atherton) 19-244 (Gidman) 20-245 (Pringle) 21-246 (Thompson) 22-247 (Atherton) 23-248 (Gidman) 24-249 (Pringle) 25-250 (Thompson) 26-251 (Atherton) 27-252 (Gidman) 28-253 (Pringle) 29-254 (Thompson) 30-255 (Atherton) 31-256 (Gidman) 32-257 (Pringle) 33-258 (Thompson) 34-259 (Atherton) 35-260 (Gidman) 36-261 (Pringle) 37-262 (Thompson) 38-263 (Atherton) 39-264 (Gidman) 40-265 (Pringle) 41-266 (Thompson) 42-267 (Atherton) 43-268 (Gidman) 44-269 (Pringle) 45-270 (Thompson) 46-271 (Atherton) 47-272 (Gidman) 48-273 (Pringle) 49-274 (Thompson) 50-275 (Atherton) 51-276 (Gidman) 52-277 (Pringle) 53-278 (Thompson) 54-279 (Atherton) 55-280 (Gidman) 56-281 (Pringle) 57-282 (Thompson) 58-283 (Atherton) 59-284 (Gidman) 60-285 (Pringle) 61-286 (Thompson) 62-287 (Atherton) 63-288 (Gidman) 64-289 (Pringle) 65-290 (Thompson) 66-291 (Atherton) 67-292 (Gidman) 68-293 (Pringle) 69-294 (Thompson) 70-295 (Atherton) 71-296 (Gidman) 72-297 (Pringle) 73-298 (Thompson) 74-299 (Atherton) 75-300 (Gidman) 76-301 (Pringle) 77-302 (Thompson) 78-303 (Atherton) 79-304 (Gidman) 80-305 (Pringle) 81-306 (Thompson) 82-307 (Atherton) 83-308 (Gidman) 84-309 (Pringle) 85-310 (Thompson) 86-311 (Atherton) 87-312 (Gidman) 88-313 (Pringle) 89-314 (Thompson) 90-315 (Atherton) 91-316 (Gidman) 92-317 (Pringle) 93-318 (Thompson) 94-319 (Atherton) 95-320 (Gidman) 96-321 (Pringle) 97-322 (Thompson) 98-323 (Atherton) 99-324 (Gidman) 100-325 (Pringle) 101-326 (Thompson) 102-327 (Atherton) 103-328 (Gidman) 104-329 (Pringle) 105-330 (Thompson) 106-331 (Atherton) 107-332 (Gidman) 108-333 (Pringle) 109-334 (Thompson) 110-335 (Atherton) 111-336 (Gidman) 112-337 (Pringle) 113-338 (Thompson) 114-339 (Atherton) 115-340 (Gidman) 116-341 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Fairer deal promised for Euro 2000

Exclusive

By Nick Harris

THE ORGANISERS of the next European Championship finals in two years' time are pledging to make tickets much more freely available to ordinary supporters.

Forty per cent of the tickets for Euro 2000, which will be jointly hosted by the Netherlands and Belgium, are likely to go on sale across Europe this autumn on a first-come first-served basis, with many likely to be sold via the Internet.

A further 25 per cent would

be made available to fans of each competing team per game, with nearly all sales on a tickets-only basis rather than as part of travel packages. The remaining 10 per cent of tickets for the tournament, which will be played in stadiums with capacities ranging from 30,000 to 50,000, will go to sponsors.

The moves are being considered by Uefa, European football's governing body, and the organising committee for the 16-nation tournament in direct response to the criticisms of ticket sales for this summer's World Cup in France.

More than 60 per cent of tickets for France 98 have been

allocated only to the French - which the European Commission says is in contravention of European law - and many competing countries are unhappy with their small allocations of tickets.

The qualifying competition for Euro 2000 begins this summer and will end in the autumn of 1999, when the draw for the finals will be made. However, the dates and venues for finals matches will be announced this autumn.

Although it is expected that many of the freely available 40 per cent of tickets will be bought by fans in the host countries, there will no specific

allocation in favour of Belgian and Dutch fans.

For France 98, more than 60 per cent of tickets have been reserved for French citizens, 16 per cent for competing sides, 14.2 per cent to sponsors and over five per cent to tour operators.

British fans, tempted by the close proximity of the Euro 2000 venues, are likely to buy tickets before the finalists are confirmed, knowing they will still be guaranteed a chance to watch Europe's largest football tournament even if their side is not playing in games they purchase tickets for.

"It is a tremendously complex

procedure," Ernie Walker, the chairman of the Euro 2000 ticketing committee, said of the ticket plans. He added that he is fully aware of the problems encountered by the World Cup's French Organising Committee (CFO), which is trying to please fans (who want access to tickets), governments (who want security guarantees), and the European Commission (which demands that tickets be sold uniformly within Europe). The CFO has also had to follow guidelines laid down by Fifa, football's world governing body.

Despite the European Commission's legal challenge to the

CFO's decision to sell more than 60 per cent of France 98 tickets to French residents, there is no chance that those already sold will be recalled for fairer distribution. At best, it is expected that the CFO will release a small amount of extra tickets, estimated at a few hundred per team for the group stage games, for general sale in the next two weeks.

Walker said: "We'll address [the issue of equal access to tickets for Euro 2000] rather than come up with the same kind of situation that we see now."

The Euro 2000 organisers will also make as many tickets

as possible available directly to fans at face value, without being expensively tied to organised packages. For France 98, there are 17 authorised tour operators world-wide who have control over the distribution of over five per cent of France 98 tickets, an average of more than 2,000 tickets per game. Fans buying tickets through these agents in Britain will be paying at least £600 per game for their travel and for a ticket with a face value of between £15 and £35.

"Uefa prefers not to have tickets linked to travel packages at all," said Walker. "Our general approach would be we

prefer tickets to go straight into the hands of genuine fans."

He added that Uefa would not directly give control of any tickets to travel agents. Only when the national federations choose to market their tickets through agents will a profit-making middle-man be used - but Uefa expects most national federations will choose to sell most tickets directly to fans at face value.

No date has yet been confirmed for when Euro 2000 tickets will be put on sale, but it is expected that full details of all arrangements, and the programme for Euro 2000 games, will be announced this autumn.

Arsenal provide example for Hodgson revival

Football

THE Blackburn Rovers manager, Roy Hodgson, still has not given up hope of finishing as runners-up in the Premiership and claiming the second Champions' League place despite seeing his charges take just four points from their last 18 matches.

Displaying the same reluctance to throw in the towel as tonight's relegation-haunted opponents Barnsley, Hodgson insists that there are points aplenty to be garnered from their remaining nine games - including home matches against Manchester United and Arsenal.

Rovers have not played since their 1-0 defeat at Everton on 14 March and Hodgson claims they are refreshed after the break. "We still have to play both Manchester United and Arsenal at home and until those games have taken place I believe

I have every right to live in hope," he said.

"Our realistic goal at the start of the season when I first came here was to get a Uefa Cup place. That would be some achievement, but I am not prepared to write us off in terms of doing even better than that."

"We've had a long break; it's a bit like starting a new season but we now have nine very important games, starting against Barnsley."

"Football is very unpredictable, you only have to take a look at what happened with Arsenal. When we beat them 3-1 [at Highbury] before Christmas people were talking of Arsenal as a club with massive problems. People said they stood no chance of winning anything and on that particular afternoon Ian Wright was in trouble due to the anger and discontent of their supporters."

"It just goes to show how things can change as now they

are being talked about as potential champions."

Rovers welcome back the Scotland striker Kevin Gallacher after suspension and a leg injury, but Damien Duff is doubtful with throat ulcers. Duff, who won his first full cap for the Republic of Ireland last week, will have a fitness check.

Hodgson hopes Duff will come through and he is likely to partner Gallacher alongside Chris Sutton, probably at the expense of the Swedish international Martin Dahlin.

Meanwhile, the Wimbledon manager, Joe Kinnear, believes his side need six points from their remaining nine games to secure Premiership survival, and he is ready to claim three when they play host to Newcastle tonight.

Kinnear said: "We know what we have got to do. Last season Sunderland were relegated on 40 points. Three more points would give us 38 and one more win would make it 41, so it is a big week for us with Bolton coming up next Saturday."

"Most of the sides in and around us in the table had results which went for us on Saturday with Everton, Barnsley and Crystal Palace getting beaten so it was not too bad for us, despite our defeat at Manchester United."

Kinnear added: "As for the opposition I don't really look into what is happening at other clubs although Newcastle have £67m worth of talent and it is going to be a tough game for us."

United book room to expand

MANCHESTER UNITED yesterday unveiled their latest plans to cash in on their famous brand name. They have formed a joint venture to build a new 110-bed-room three-star hotel next to their Old Trafford ground.

Martin Edwards, United's chief executive, also said the club hoped to expand Old Trafford, already the largest ground in the Premiership, well beyond its 55,000 capacity.

As Sharp signed a two-year deal, worth more than £6m, to continue its shirt sponsorship, United announced an 11 per cent rise in profits before transfer fees to £17.5m for the six months to January. Some of those profits will be spent on new seven-year contracts for the Neville brothers, while discussions with David Beckham, Paul Scholes and Nicky Butt are ongoing.

Investment column, page 20



Floor show: Boxer Mike Tyson shows wrestler Shawn Michaels who is boss in Boston

Photograph: Reuters

Tyson gets to grips with \$4m in the ring of make-believe

IF SPORT is theatre, then pro wrestling is its pantomime. But does that really make Mike Tyson an ugly sister?

On Sunday night at the Fleet Center, Boston, some 19,000 Americans welcomed the former heavyweight boxing champion into the wild and wacky world of the World Wrestling Federation at the WrestleMania XIV extravaganza.

A freak show for a freak? A safe haven for a misfit? Preferable, at least, to the Indiana prison where Tyson served three years for rape. And also to boxing, it seems. "I've been screwed there, but at least I haven't been screwed here," said Tyson, who refused to discuss his former field of excellence.

Beggars cannot be choosers. And for Tyson, who has discovered a huge hole in his bank account caused by alleged career mismanagement, it is a case of any port in a storm. And nothing Tyson does surprises anyone. Wrestling? Why not? It is a well paid job and at least no one gets hurt.

Tyson boosted his bank balance by some \$4m (£2.4m) through serving as an enforcer - WWF-speak for an official - for the match between the organisation's heavyweight champion, "Heartbreak Kid" Shawn Michaels and blue-collar crowd favourite "Stone Cold" Steve Austin, aka "The Texas Rattlesnake". The toughest SOB in the WWF, and so on and so forth.

Tyson, contractually obliged, one supposes, has been taking part in WWF promotions over the past two months and his liv-

Glyn Leach reports from Boston on a boxing legend's entry into the wacky world of wrestling

el of performance, if it could be called that, has improved significantly by the big night. But his efforts could hardly be called impressive.

Wrestling is a world of heroes and heels; guess what role Tyson was cast in? Introduced as the "Baddest Man on the Planet", he entered the arena to a crescendo of boos and catcalls. Doing his best to milk the crowd's displeasure, he climbed into the ring prior to the main event's start and sneered a lot, which presumably was enough to please the WWF.

When the Austin-Michaels bout began, Tyson strolled around ringside, ostensibly attempting to keep order.

One sensed that the crowd, if not the WWF, expected more. There were attempts to goad the boxer into meaningful participation, but chants of "Holyfield, Holyfield" did not cut the mustard and for long periods it looked as though he was surplus to requirements. In short, he sneered all the way to the bank.

His boxing licence, suspended until July due to last year's savage biting of Evander Holyfield's ear, Tyson could hardly afford to turn the job down.

And the WWF needs Tyson as much as he needs them. The organisation is fighting a TV

ratings war with its rival group, World Championship Wrestling, and many of its biggest names have deserted, including veteran star Hulk Hogan.

Wrestling embraces rebirth, which must be attractive to Tyson. Austin, for one, has previously been billed as "The Ringmaster" and "Stunning Steve" before finding an identity that worked.

It is also OK to be confused. An ideal home, in fact, for a faded and jaded 32-year-old boxer who has been a Catholic, a Baptist and is currently a Fruit of Islam.

The original script had Tyson fighting Austin, but that was amended to have the boxer act as an enforcer for the main bout. However, and much to the "consternation" of WWF owner Vince McMahon, Tyson aligned with DeGeneration X, an outlawed wrestling faction comprising Michaels and other wrestlers with miscreant attitudes.

D-X rules the WWF. Or did until Austin defeated Michaels by a pin fall. But guess what? Tyson was never one of them anyway. He was in cahoots with Austin all along.

It simply had to be that way because the impressively athletic Michaels, easily the best stunt man/actor on show, was the only wrestler who could be relied on to make Tyson look convincing when the time finally came for Iron Mike to throw a "punch". Down went Michaels, as though poisoned. One could almost believe claims that Michaels had suffered two ruptured discs. Well, almost.

Finalists left with no tickets

Rugby Union

By Chris Hewett

ENGLISH rugby has spent the past two years tearing itself apart, so it should not have come as any great surprise yesterday when the committee-room politicians proved unable to organise a simple Twickenham cup final without provoking a public punch-up with the competing clubs. Nevertheless, Saracens and Wasps were both flabbergasted when the Rugby Football Union refused to hand over tickets for sale at their respective box offices.

Both sides have been granted an allocation of 15,000 tickets, but their supporters will have to go via Twickenham rather than pop along to Vicarage Road or Loftus Road. "The RFU management board has decided to distribute the tickets from a sole source for administrative and logistical reasons," said a spokesman for the union. "The aim is to ensure that the financial proceeds from the final can be distributed more quickly and efficiently to the 122 clubs who took part."

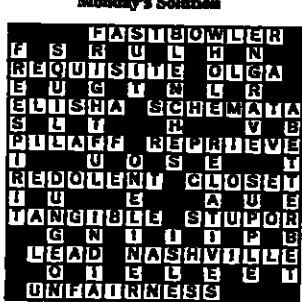
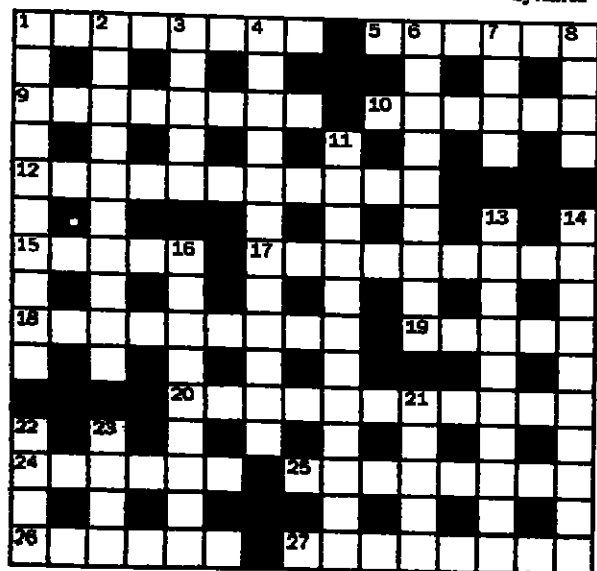
It was not an explanation that satisfied either of the finalists, who were planning on using ticket sales to underpin major public relations initiatives in their Watford and west London catchment areas. "Unbelievable," said Geoff Huxstep, the Wasps chief executive. "A club needs to use the distribution of cup final tickets to heighten its profile and develop its image."

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3572, Tuesday 31 March

By Alfred

Monday's Solution



- ACROSS**
- 1 Retrogressive colonel upset lately in this place (8)
 - 5 Shows surprise seeing leading actor on back street (6)
 - 9 Golfers' shouts with attempt at dealing with wood? (8)
 - 10 With border like this would be getting jammed (6)
 - 12 Talk on work entrancing cold Japanese purchaser is rubbish (11)
 - 15 Bring forth young, 50, in grotto (5)
 - 17 Extensive dilemmas in wild parts of Wales (9)
 - 18 Actor's Union's endlessly clever and fair (9)
 - 19 Two different kinds of river in the country (5)

- 20 Avoid dull names made ineffective (4,3,4)
- 24 It's funny about second order (6)
- 25 Party pub in punitive fines (4,4)
- 26 Most of you can be found in curve above (6)
- 27 Reportedly don't look far enough beneath the waves (8)

- DOWN**
- 1 Cover for long-term prisoner? (4,6)
 - 2 Bit of brain seen to wax with war in ancient Rome (10)
 - 3 Car leaves border town to get cotton yarn (5)
 - 4 Phantom could make one firing a jolly? (5,1,6)
 - 6 Sailor holds current live cuddly animal (5,4)
 - 7 Control that is set up in the navy (4)
 - 8 Long story about a temerous substance (4)
 - 11 Old, old gent in a car crash - over 80 (12)
 - 13 Stock Exchange postponements hold up deliveries (5,5)
 - 14 Ring an Italian woman for drug (10)
 - 16 A furthering of old Hitchcock's speciality (9)
 - 21 Studies European compact (5)
 - 22 One's right to leave beetle's healing wound (4)
 - 23 Catch sight of this in one's pyjamas (4)

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